THE

HEBREW LANGUAGE.

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VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF

ASSYRIAN RESEARCH.

BY

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PREFACE.

The substance of the present treatise is a reprint, in a revised and augmented form, of a series of articles which appeared in Nos. 2897, 2898, 2900, 2902, 2908, 2909, 2913 of the *Athenaeum*.[1] In reissuing these articles in the shape of a separate publication I have in view the double object of making them accessible to a larger circle of readers and of eliciting the opinions of scholars competent to judge of the soundness or otherwise of the principles here advocated. My esteemed teacher, Professor Dillmann, in his discussion on the site of Paradise, ironically refers to my own solution of that difficult question as having been effected by "the well known wand of cuneiform research."[2] I am prepared to hear the same remark applied to the present work, which endeavours to apply the results of Assyriology to the lexicographical treatment of the Hebrew language. I reject from the very outset the reproach that I am trying to explain "everything" by Assyrian. It is true I have explained Assyrian itself by its own help and it is no small satis-

[1] The importance of Assyriology to Hebrew lexicography; see *Athenaeum*, May 5. 12. 26; June 9; July 21. 28; August 25. 1883.

[2] *Genesis*, 4th edition, p. 61.

faction to me that I have arrived at results which have already met with the approval of scholars not biased in favour of Assyriology.

When I commenced the study of Assyrian, Assyriology was in a state of slavish dependency on Arabic lexicography. People were happy to compare the Assyrian *takâlu*, "to trust," now recognised to mean originally "to be strong," with the eighth form of the Arabic وكل (اتّكل), and felt only secure under the sheltering roof of Arabic lexicography. I soon became convinced that Arabic was less important to the study of Assyrian than the North Semitic languages, the Hebrew and the Aramaic dialects, a conviction which I regard as the fundamental principle of Assyrian research. When I undertook the compilation of my Assyrian dictionary and, in obedience to the first principle of lexicography, began to explain Assyrian by the rich and various stores of its own literature, I was first taught by the instructive instances of the verbs דגל and נחל that Assyrian assigns to these and other stems a meaning far different from that based on the comparison of Arabic, a meaning which not only admirably suits the context, but is also directly confirmed by the *parallelismus membrorum*. Thus the Assyrian dictionary, which embodies a world of ancient Semitic thought and speech, disclosed an entirely new foundation for the understanding of the sacred language of the Old Testament and created a new line of interpretation directly opposed to the old system of Assyrian as well as of Hebrew lexicography.

Lest it should be supposed that I am guided in this little work by a principle of unjust warfare against the ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary, I would remark that

my censure is limited to those cases where the editors have erroneously deviated from the correct views of Gesenius himself, or have failed to recognise what Fürst and Levy had already anticipated. It is also to be deplored that in a book intended to introduce young beginners to the study of the Semitic languages the boundary of hypothesis and certainty is not marked with sufficient clearness. On the other hand, I cheerfully acknowledge that the ninth edition contains a good many improvements in matters of detail. In opposing my own views to those expressed in the ninth edition nothing is more remote from my intention than personal controversy. The warm interest which my revered teacher, Professor Fleischer, has taken in the preparation of the two last editions of the dictionary excludes controversy, in the common sense of the word, on the part of an attached pupil. Nor am I so unreasonable as to charge the editors with having taken no notice of results which they could not have known. I oppose my own view to that of the ninth edition, because Gesenius's dictionary occupies the first and foremost place in Hebrew lexicography, and claims to represent the mental labour which men of different shades of theological opinion have devoted to the exegesis of the Old Testament. I have myself experienced the greatest difficulty in breaking through the spell of ideas imbibed at an early age. The disputes here raised are only concerned with facts, and for them I am not responsible, unless I be reproached for having recognised and proclaimed them before the world. If, in spite of these assertions to the contrary, this treatise should still be considered too controversial, I shall derive comfort from the thought, that this very character may induce the advocates of the old system to oppose their own views to my statements, and

thus to bring about the establishment of truth which is the desired end of all our efforts.

The facts here brought forward are of such fundamental importance, that I shall be grateful for any well-founded objections which may be urged against them. They materially change our views of the different degrees of affinity between the Semitic languages, and assign chiefly to Arabic a position quite different from that which it has hitherto occupied. If we take a single Arabic verb like هلك as compared with the North Semitic הלך, and consider the loss sustained by Arabic of so many ancient Semitic words (see Dillmann, Ethiopic Grammar, p. 5, note), and the numerous inflections of late origin, we are compelled to admit that Arabic cannot be the prototype of the other Semitic languages, least of all of Hebrew. This opinion receives the fullest confirmation from Assyrian research. It is, therefore, time to abandon the ordinary practice of forcing the peculiar, often late, meanings of the Arabic words upon the much older Hebrew sister. The editors of the last editions of Gesenius's dictionary will perhaps now agree with me that in future it will no longer be sufficient to patch some new Assyrian pieces upon an old cloth, but that a thorough revision of every Hebrew stem and of every Hebrew word must be effected. This salutary reformation of the Hebrew dictionary by means of Assyrian, so far from increasing the bulk of the lexicon[1], will save much useful space by the removal of a mass of erroneous statements and worthless speculations.

The transfer of the leading part in Hebrew lexicography from Arabic to Assyrian is, however, only one point

[1] See Preface of the ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary, p. I.

of five, which justify, in my opinion, the compilation of a new Hebrew dictionary. The Hebrew proper names occurring in the Old Testament require a thorough and extensive revision scarcely imagined by the continuators of Gesenius's work. I forbear mentioning here a considerable number of Hebrew post-exilic names receiving the most satisfactory explanation by the corresponding Babylonian names; a number of Hebrew stems and words preserved only in proper names like עֲדַלְּם, עֲתַלְיָה, לֶמֶךְ, קִישׁ, תִּרַח, תִּרְצָה, which obtain the most surprising light by the Assyrian language; and the illustration of many proper names like יֶרֶד, רְאוּמָה by parallel names in Assyrian. But I wish to draw particular attention to the mode of naming the children which is again a point of essential agreement between Babylonian and Hebrew. An attentive study of the several thousand Babylonian and Assyrian proper names cannot fail to sharpen our eye for a better understanding of the Hebrew names of persons. I do not mean here explanations like חֲמוּאֵל, "heat of god," מַגְפִּיעָשׁ, "killer of moths," שִׁמְעוֹן, "perhaps like יְשִׁימוֹן desert," אֲחִימַי, "brother of the water, *i. e.*, dwelling near the water, or, perhaps, man of a watery heart, *i. e.*, a coward," or פְּתוּיֵאל, "divine simplicity, if not for מְתוּיֵאל"—though it seems to me impossible that a child ever and anywhere could have been called "desert" or "divine simplicity," or that the hereditary prince of the Hamathites was named תֹּעִי (1 Chron. xviii. 9), meaning "madness." Nor have I in view the names of prophetic import, which predict the future station and avocation of a man, as סִיסְרָא, which, according to Dietrich, means "line of battle *or* general," an explanation by which that Canaanitic commander is invested as a helpless infant with the staff of military command. I rather refer to the

explanations of the purest and most easy Hebrew proper names given in Gesenius's dictionary, names like חֲנַנְיָה, שְׁמַעְיָה, אֱלִישָׁפָט. It is no small difference whether these names are interpreted with Gesenius's dictionary "Jahve is merciful," "Jahve hears," "my God judges," or, in accordance with grammar and true Semitic thought, "Jahve has been gracious," "Jahve has heard," "my God has judged." The interpretations of Gesenius's dictionary express divine qualities in general, but the names simply relate to, and commemorate, facts connected with the birth of the child. It is difficult to understand, how that beautiful and easy department of Hebrew nomenclature could have been so carelessly treated. Thus, מַלְכִּירָם is rightly translated by "my king is sublime," while אֲדֹנִירָם is wrongly rendered "lord of the height." The name יְדָיָה, evidently a name like יִרְמְיָה, יִרְיאֵל and others, could never have meant "praising Jahve." How can the Qal ידה mean "to praise"? Nor does אָזְנִי mean "ear of Jahve." It has the same meaning as שְׁמְעִי, "the hearing of my prayer," — the birth of the child is the divine fulfilment of the father's prayers. I assert with the fullest confidence that there are scarcely a hundred Hebrew proper names the explanation of which in Gesenius's dictionary does not challenge criticism. It is here out of place to seek an excuse by the convenient saying *Dies diem docet*, the truth could here have been seen many years ago.

A second and still more serious point of disagreement with Gesenius's dictionary is the treatment of the roots. The exasperating consistency with which all Hebrew stems are derived from a root of two consonants and the most various meanings deduced from one common primary meaning, is open to many serious objections. Even granted

that some of these curious speculations on the meanings attached to the Semitic sounds are right, they do not deserve a place in the Hebrew dictionary itself, but ought to be separately dealt with in an appendix. Hebrew lexicography in its present state has to supply *desiderata* of a far more solid and important character. A sharper understanding of the Hebrew stems themselves as to their sounds and accurate meaning or shades of meaning is especially required. I cannot see any real profit resulting from such a vague theory as that of the supposed roots. The eighth edition of Gesenius's dictionary derived the word מֶכֶס, "tribute", from כָּסַס, "to number," the root of which we are taught is כס, "to cut, to separate"; counting is said to be separating, dividing. The ninth edition has given up this explanation; following Fleischer, it rightly states that מכס is the stem. But Arabic مكس means "to oppress, to harm some one"; how, then, could מֶכֶס mean tribute? The editors of the ninth edition enlighten us on the subject. Going back to the root of the stem, מך, which is said to mean "to press, *comprimere*," they state that "to count" is "to compress, *numero comprehendere*". מֶכֶס is, therefore, "tribute" as that which is comprised in a certain number. I am at a loss to see the force of this mode of etymological reasoning. Is there any scientific value in the conjecture that יָצַת, "to kindle fire", may go back to the root צת, allied with שת, and mean originally "to *lay* the fire"? According to the preface of the ninth edition, the etymologies have been carefully revised and that which is certain has been separated, as far as possible, from that which is only probable. Nevertheless, שָׁקָה is still identified with שָׁתָה (for the interchange of ק and אַתָּה ת, "thou", and the suffix ד are compared!), which itself is derived from the root שת,

"to sit down," and שְׁתָה, "to drink," is stated to mean originally "to make the thirst sit down, *sedare sitim.*" Yet, in another place, שָׁקָה is again derived from the root שׁק and is said to be akin to the other verbs נסך, זקק, יצק! I could give many more instances of this kind. I think, all these speculations upon the roots and their vague meanings could be omitted without any harm to the Hebrew dictionary and the enormous space saved by this omission could be turned to a better and more useful account.

I have not yet decided whether I shall discuss these and other points in a special introduction or Prolegomena to a new Hebrew dictionary or publish at once my own Hebrew dictionary which I have compiled along with my Assyrian dictionary. In the meantime I submit this treatise to the judgment of Semitic scholars. Its publication was necessary, because the philological notes added in my Assyrian dictionary to every stem or word will be only understood in connexion with the principles expounded in this treatise. I am not bold enough to believe that, in this first attempt, I have shed light everywhere by the "wand" of Assyriology. I shall be satisfied if I have succeeded in unearthing from the mines of Babylonian and Assyrian antiquity some material useful for a better understanding and appreciation of the sacred records of the Old Testament.

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Frederic Delitzsch.

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viewed in the light of Assyrian Research.

I.

FEW departments of linguistic research have been so thoroughly investigated as that of the language of the Old Testament. As a natural consequence of such unremitting labour, the Biblical books written in that tongue are now better understood than perhaps any other sacred record handed down to posterity. Yet it is a fact well known to every serious student of the Old Testament that there still remains a large number of passages, some of them of the highest importance, which have received very divergent and far from satisfactory explanations at the hands of commentators. There is likewise a long list of single words of which the true sense is quite uncertain. We have here in view not only the names of some of the animals specified by the Levitical law[1]; the names of plants[2] and precious stones[3]; the nouns and verbs of rare occurrence and the

[1] For instance אֲנָפָה.

[2] *E. g.* חַרְבֹּנָה.

[3] *E. g.* שֹׁהַם, סַחֲרֶת.

so-called ἅπαξ λεγόμενα[1], but also verbs of frequent use, including such as have a number of derivatives.[2] There are, besides, certain grammatical problems, whose true solution has not yet been found.

These difficulties of interpretation are mainly due to the want of a tradition based on a minute and exact knowledge of Old Testament language and literature. Nor is it difficult to see why such a tradition is wanting.

The transportation of the ten tribes from Palestine to Mesopotamia and Media, and the close intercourse of those left behind with people of different nations, as the Elamites, Babylonians, and Arabs, who supplied the places of the exiled Israelites, struck a deadly blow at the ancient language of the kingdom of Israel. Nor was it destined to flourish much longer in the kingdom of Judah. In the year 701 B. C. Sennacherib carried away captive from the mountain districts of Judah no less than 200,150 inhabitants[3], and Nebuchadnezzar afterwards completed the work commenced by his Assyrian predecessor. Still, the language continued to live for a time in Babylonia, as is amply shown by the pure, classical Hebrew of that great national prophet whom modern criticism has styled the "Deutero-Isaiah."

The termination, however, of the Babylonian exile marks the beginning of that process by which Hebrew gra-

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[1] *E. g.* בָּלַח; חַלְמוּת, שַׁשׁ; זרב, תכה.

[2] For instance כמר, from which כֹּמֶר, „heathen priest", and מִכְמֶרֶת, „net" are derived.

[3] See Sennacher. iii. 11 ff. It is difficult to understand, how Sennacherib was capable of transporting such a multitude after the destruction, which his army is reported to have suffered at the hand of the angel of the Lord.

dually disappeared from among living languages. It is true that that small portion of the nation who availed themselves of the permission to return to the Holy Land still wrote and spoke Hebrew, but the Aramaic dialect, which had been favoured by the Persian kings and was almost regarded as the official language of the Western portion of the Persian empire, had already begun to bring its deteriorating influence to bear upon it, and, rapidly advancing, was conquering one portion of Palestine after the other. This process continued under the dominion of the Greeks and was greatly hastened by the various wars and revolutions which the Jewish nation experienced during that period. Hebrew became more and more confined to the narrow circle of the learned, in whose hands it gradually assumed the character of an artificial language and was corrupted by an intermixture of Aramaic elements.[1] It was still used for literary purposes at the time of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabees, but it had already ceased to be a spoken language. This is strikingly illustrated by the book of Daniel (composed about 167 B. C.) and the book of Chronicles (about 200 B. C.). Even so erudite a Jew as the compiler of the last-named work fails to grasp the import of the more difficult passages and expressions in the older portions of the sacred code on which his own work is based. The learned among the Jews, during the last two centuries before Christ, even preferred to write in Aramaic, and at the time of Christ that dialect reigned supreme as the adopted language of the country.

It is true that the study of their sacred language remained a favourite occupation among the Jews, who trans-

[1] See Nöldeke, Art. Aram, in Schenkel's *Bibel-Lexicon*.

mitted their knowledge to succeeding generations, but a deeper understanding of the sacred text was lost. The Greek translation of the Septuagint, some portions of which date as far back as the third century B. C., and the so-called Targumim, or Aramaic interpretations, though in some respects valuable for the understanding of the text, show unmistakable signs of an imperfect knowledge of the old Hebrew language. As Noeldeke justly remarks, "Those old translations are, at the present state of Biblical philology, not very important for the recognition of the true sense. They rarely assist, where the usual philological resources fail, in the explanation of difficult words and passages, their translation being usually due to a mere guess."[1]

Fortunately another resource is available which supplies in some measure the want of a trustworthy tradition. We refer to the wonderful aid afforded by the language of the Old Testament itself by means of the context, parallel passages, and the so-called *parallelismus membrorum*. The comparison

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[1] „Für den jetzigen Standpunkt der biblischen Philologie sind jene Uebersetzungen zur Erkenntniss des wahren Sinnes nicht besonders wichtig. Man ist zu der Einsicht gekommen, dass in den Fällen, wo uns die sonstigen philologischen Hülfsmittel zur Erklärung schwieriger Worte und Stellen im Stich lassen, die alten Uebersetzungen selten fördern, denn gewöhnlich haben auch sie dann den Sinn nur errathen." See Nöldeke, *Alttestamentliche Literatur*, p. 246. Even among the Jews themselves the necessity was sometimes felt of going beyond the traditional interpretation. The illustrious Abu'l-Walîd often applies the Arabic language to the elucidation of Hebrew. The Karaite Jews, who naturally opposed the traditional mode of interpretation, wrote chiefly in Arabic and had frequently recourse to that language in explaining the sacred text.

of the kindred Semitic tongues is in this respect only of a secondary value and often misleading. And here it must be stated that the indiscreet use made of the cognate dialects, and more particularly of Arabic, has blinded the eyes of many distinguished labourers in this field against the native power of the Hebrew language.

The value of Arabic for Hebrew lexicography has been greatly exaggerated. It seems to me that the continuators of Gesenius's great and admirable work have fallen in this respect into errors, against which the original compiler had wisely guarded himself. The well-known fact that the Arabic language has preserved in numerous instances original forms of the Semitic idiom which are lost in the kindred dialects, combined with the enormous copiousness of its vocabulary, has led to the erroneous supposition that the same degree of unchanged originality is to be assumed for the meanings of the Arabic words. The common practice of arbitrarily forcing Arabic meanings upon Hebrew words constitutes a fundamental error of modern Hebrew lexicography. A few instances will suffice to show the fatal consequences of this practice. Because Arabic نهل means "to drink" ("primo haustu bibit camelus"), the same meaning is ascribed to Heb. נחל, and the Piel נִחֵל is explained to mean "to give to drink, to lead to water"— in general, "to lead, guide, protect"! We question whether this generally accepted sense of נִחֵל can be entertained any longer. It is plainly indicated by the *parallelismus membrorum* in Ps. xxiii. 2, and by the parallel passages 2 Chron. xxxii. 22 and 1 Chron. xxii. 18, that נָחַל is a synonym of רָבַץ, "to lie down," and נוּחַ, "to rest," which is further confirmed by the fact that *na'âlu*, *nâḫu*, and *rabâṣu* are the equivalents of the same ideogram in the

old Babylonian bilingual texts.[1] We therefore translate the passages Ps. xxiii. 2, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, *he causes me to rest beside* the still waters"; 2 Chron. xxxii. 22, "And the Lord *gave them rest* on every side" (as in 1 Chron. xxii. 18, not "And guided them on every side"); Ex. xv. 13, "Thou in thy strength *hast placed them in safety in* thy holy habitation"; 2 Chron. xxviii. 15, "And *put* all the feeble of them *upon asses,* and brought them to Jericho"; finally, Gen. xlvii. 17, "And he (Joseph) *satisfied* them with bread," not "And he fed them with bread" &c.

Another striking instance is afforded by the zoological name רְאֵם or רִים. We read in Job xxxix. 9—10: "Will the *rêm* be willing to serve thee or abide by thy crib? Canst thou bind the *rêm* with his band in the furrow, or will he harrow the valleys after thee?" What animal is the רְאֵם? It is evident from the poet's words that it must be a wild animal, certainly one quite unfitted for the peaceful labour of ploughing the field. The Authorized Version translates רְאֵם by "unicorn." But even granting the existence of such an animal, it was surely never at home in Palestine. Besides, who does not see the obvious contradiction involved in the translation of Ps. xxii. 21, "For thou hast heard me from the horns [dual in Hebrew] of the unicorns," where more than one horn is ascribed to the *uni*corn? The last two editions of Gesenius's dictionary explain רְאֵם by the Arabic رئم, *Antilope leucoryx,* although that animal could never have lived in Palestine, since its home being in the sandy wastes of Arabia and of the north-eastern regions of

[1] Compare for *na'âlu* = *rabâṣu*, for instance, *W. A. I.* iv. 27, 19 and 20a with 17, 51 and 52a. 16 and 17b.

Africa. Besides, in spite of its two spear-shaped horns, the *Antilope leucoryx* is known to be an animal of meek disposition, directly opposed to the wild, hostile nature ascribed to the רְאֵם. Gesenius, guided by the *parallelismus membrorum* in passages like Deut. xxxiii. 17, translates buffalo; but the existence of the buffalo in further Asia is traceable only a short time before the Christian era. We know now, by the cuneiform inscriptions and the pictorial representations on the Assyrian sculptures, that the רְאֵם is the Assyrian *rîmu*, that strong-horned, fierce-looking wild bull, skilled in climbing the mountains[1], whose colossal and formidable likeness was placed by the Assyrian kings before the entrance of their palaces to ward off and terrify the approaching enemy.[2]

It may be expedient to mention here another deplorable error of modern Hebrew lexicography, which is centred in the common practice of representing the sense of Arabic words as the original meaning of their Hebrew equivalents, even in cases where each of the two languages exhibits a totally different usage of the word in question. Thus Hebrew יָדַע is explained by the Arabic وَدَعَ, "to deposit," *i. e.*, to deposit in the mind, to know[3]; פָּדַר, "to be fat," by فَدَرَ,

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[1] This character of the animal seems to be alluded to in the above mentioned passage: "will he harrow *the valleys* after thee?"

[2] It may be interesting to enumerate here the synonyms of *rîmu*: 1) *arḫu*, *i. e.* the quick one (ארח "to be quick"). 2) *pîru*, originally "strong" (*piyâr*, a synonym of *ḳarradu* "strong", and probably *pîru*, the Assyrian name of the "elefant," are derived from the same root). 3) *lû*, with its feminine form *lêtu*, from the stem לאה, which is a common Assyrian word for "to be strong."

[3] Gesenius in *Thesaurus*, second edition, rightly remarks *s. v.* ידע: "Non audiendi sunt qui *sciendi* potestatem apud Hebraeos repetant a *reponendo* sc. in animo hominis."

"to break," *i. e.*, to be broken, to be languid, soft, fat; שָׁלַח, "to send," by سلخ, "to skin," *i. e.*, to draw out, to extend, to stretch out, to send; שָׁקַר, "to lie," by شَقِرَ, „to be red," *i. e.*, to redden, to paint red, to varnish the truth, *i. e.*, to lie; yea, we are told that כָּשַׁר means "to join," and is to compared to the Arabic كسر, "to break," because joining as well as breaking may be effected by striking one object against the other.

It must be owned that these combinations do credit to the ingenuity of their authors. Their plausibility becomes, however, seriously impaired when we consider the totally different history of the two languages. Hebrew became a literary language many centuries before the Christian era. Arabic was not used for literary purposes until the seventh century of our era. How, then, is it possible to make Arabic the prototype of a sister tongue so much older as Hebrew? Further, it must be taken into account, that the Aramaic dialect and, in some instances, even Ethiopic exhibit the same late meanings ascribed to Hebrew. If we admit that Arabic is the prototype of the other Semitic languages, we cannot but conclude, that they have passed side by side through the same phases of development to arrive at the same stage of decay as to the meanings of their words. How, then, can we account for the differences of sound by which one is separated from the other? These considerations alone suffice to shake our belief in a system of etymological research so exclusively based on Arabic. The whole fabric is, however, finally overturned by the monumental literature of Babylonia and Assyria.

On the other hand, the comparison of the kindred tongues is of inestimable value in the explanation of the He-

brew sounds. In this respect especially the Aramaic and Arabic dialects have done good service in advancing Hebrew lexicography. By their help a rigid philological method was for the first time applied to the treatment of the Hebrew roots. The comparison of the cognate dialects demonstrated clearly that certain roots—as ערב عرب "to mix," and ערב غرب "to enter, to set" (of the sun)—which in spelling had come to be one in Hebrew, were originally distinct and of entirely different etymology. In this respect Arabic is very instructive for the roots containing one of the gutturals ח (*ḥ*, *ḫ* = ح, خ) and ע (ʿ, *ġ* = ع, غ), and, combined with Syriac, for those containing one of the sibilants שׁ, ז and צ. It is to be lamented that even in the latest editions of Gesenius's dictionary the necessity of consistently applying this fundamental law of Hebrew lexicography is not sufficiently recognized. To quote a few instances, שָׁנָה, "year," is still explained as meaning the "repetition of the same natural phenomena" (the seasons), and is compared with the Semitic numeral for "two," though the latter has an original *ṯ*, ث. In like manner אִשָּׁה, "woman," is represented, in accordance with the etymology set forth in Gen. ii. 23, as the feminine form of אִישׁ, "man," though it is clearly derived from the root أنث, "to be feeble," denoting the woman as the feeble one, while אִישׁ must be referred to a root אישׁ, "to be strong," marking the man as the strong one.[1]

[1] Another derivative of the root אישׁ is אִישׁוֹן, generally wrongly translated by "apple of the eye," because occurring in passages like Deut. xxxii. 10 ("he kept him as the apple of his eye") in connexion with עַיִן, "eye." That this translation is wrong is evident from the passage in Ps. xvii. 8, where we read שָׁמְרֵנִי כְּאִישׁוֹן בַּת־עָיִן, which would have to be translated "Keep me as the 'apple of the apple of

The Hebrew אֶצְבַּע, "finger", is still combined with صبغ "to dye" or "to dip," though this combination is contradicted by the Arabic أُصْبُعٌ, which has a ع, not a غ. If such plain etymologies fail to be recognised, what can be expected in cases of a more intricate nature, such as the stems צור or צבה?

The close relationship existing between the several Semitic languages naturally causes each of them to throw light upon the other. It was, therefore, clear from the very first that the Semitic idiom of the Assyrian and Babylonian literature, so recently brought to light by the excavations in Mesopotamia, would prove a valuable help towards a better understanding of the Hebrew language. It will now be our object to show that the language of the cuneiform inscriptions is a far greater aid to the advancement of Hebrew philology than the other cognate dialets. Indeed it will be seen that Assyriology is actually inaugurating a new era of Hebrew lexicography.

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the eye," for בַּת־עַיִן certainly means the apple of the eye (see Lament. ii. 18). And what sense does this translation of אִישׁוֹן yield in passages like Prov. vii. 9, "In the apple of the eye of the black and dark night"? The authors of the Authorized Version, rightly feeling the difficulty, have omitted to render אִישׁוֹן in their translation of this passage and of Ps. xvii. 8. The true sense of אִישׁוֹן has already been recognized by Levy in his dictionary of the Targumim. It is a synonym of עֻצְמָם, meaning "strength," used like עֻצְמָם in Ex. xxiv. 10, as is further confirmed by the Assyrian *išânu*. The above-quoted passages are therefore to be rendered: "He kept him *as his own eye*" (Deut. xxxii. 10); "Keep me *even as the apple of the eye*" (Ps. xvii. 8) "*Even in* the black and dark night" (Prov. vii. 9).

II.

In one respect it was to be expected that a special advantage would accrue to Hebrew lexicography from Assyrian research, inasmuch as the Babylonian and Assyrian proper names of persons and deities, and the geographical and official names, which are of such frequent occurrence in the Old Testament, could only receive a final and satisfactory explanation by the language of the cuneiform inscriptions. It must be owned that Assyriology has fully realized these expectations.[1] We know now the meaning of

[1] Of course, there are still some dark points requiring to be cleared up. Thus, the true meaning of the names of the god מְרֹאדַךְ or of the river חִדֶּקֶל has not yet been settled with certainty. As to the name of the goddess עַשְׁתֹּרֶת, we must insist upon its non-Semitic origin (see the German edition of George Smith's Chaldean Genesis, p. 273. 276 f.). *Iš-tar* is a compound like *Nam-tar* and *aš-tar;* see *W. A. I.* v. 20, 17 a. b, where the sign *lal* is to be changed into *tar*. It is clearly a gloss showing that the Assyrian *aštartum* (the name of the fastening of a door) is borrowed from the non-Semitic *aš* "power" or "strength" and *tar* "to fix". The only obscure point in the name of *Ištar* is the first syllable. The meaning "light" *(ûru)*, which George Smith assigned to it, rests on an erroneous reading. The word *Ištar* had probably a rather general meaning such as "fate-deciding." This is, at least, suggested by the ideograms of two inferior deities, one element of which is *iš-tar* (see Delitzsch, *Assyrische Lesestücke*, 2nd edition, p. 46, l. 51; p. 47, l. 53). The non-Semitic name *Ištar* passed

the names of kings like אֲסַר־חַדּוֹן (Assyr. *Aššûr-âḫ-iddin*, "Asur has given a brother") and אֱוִיל מְרֹדַךְ (Babyl. *Avêl-Marduk*, "Man *or* servant of Merodach"). We have learnt that the god Nergal (נֶרְגַל, *Nêrgal*), whom the men of Cuth made (see 2 Kings xvii. 30), is the deity represented by the colossal lions at the entrance of the royal palaces, and that his non-Semitic name, *Nê-uru-gal*, characterizes him as the governor of the "great city," or the empire of death.[1] We have further been taught that the true meaning of בָּבֶל, *Bâbîlu* is not "confusion," as explained in Gen. xi. 9, but "gate of God"; and we can now prove that כָּלַח (Gen. x. 11), the sister city of Nineveh and the Assyrian *Kalḫu*, is "the strong, firm city," derived from the same root as Heb. כָּלַח (see Job v. 26 and xxx. 2).[2] Finally, the proper meaning of official names, as תַּרְתָּן, is now plainly seen. The commander-in-chief of the Assyrian army, whom the books of Kings call *tartân*, is the Assyrian *turtânu*—a genuine Semitic word, derived from *tûrtu*, a by-form of *têrtu*, which is the common Assyrian word for law or commandment (comp. Heb. תּוֹרָה?). *Turtânu* thus answers exactly to the Hebrew term מְחֹקֵק. Heb. פַּחָה, the official name of the Chaldean

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into the Assyrian language as *Ištârtu*, which, at the same time, became a general name of any female deity, and was finally applied to any female being, especially to the *ḳadištu*, קְדֵשָׁה. The Hebrew עַשְׁתֹּרֶת in עַשְׁתְּרוֹת צֹאן (Deut. vii. 13; xxviii. 4. 18. 51) was even used of the females of the flock of sheep and goats; compare Deut. vii. 13, where עֶ is clearly a synonym of שֶׁגֶר, which, again, is a synonym of רֶחֶם, "womb", Ex. xiii. 12.

[1] See the German edition of George Smith's Chaldean Genesis, p. 275 f.

[2] For similar names like *Purâtu*, פְּרָת, "Euphrates," *Kûtu*, כּוּת, כּוּתָה, "Cuth," *Ninua*, נִינְוֵה, "Nineveh" see our book entitled *Wo lag das Paradies?* p. 169 f. 217 f. 260.

prefects, who were at the same time military governors, is the Babylonian *paḫâtu* or *piḫâtu*, originally a portioned-off district or province (derived from Assyrian *paḫû*, "to shut, to enclose"), afterwards the governor (*bêl paḫâti*) himself. The רַבְשָׁקֵה (Is. xxxvi. 2; 2 Kings xviii. 17), who commanded the Assyrian army dispatched by Sennacherib against Hezekiah of Judah, is not the chief butler, an official little fitted to command a military expedition; he is the Assyrian *rab-šâḳê* or *rabšâḳ*, the "chief of the officers," the colonel. The Hebrew סְגָנִים has long been compared with the Assyrian *šaknûti*, *lit.* "the appointed" and especially "the vicegerents." The Assyrian *šaknu* is a synonym of *šalaṭ* (שׁלט), "governor." The softening of the ד to ג is probably due to the influence of the lingual. Further, the Hebrew סָפְסָר is the "scribe," Assyr. *tupšarru* (for *t*, not *d*, see our *Assyrische Lesestücke*, p. 60, l. 38). This meaning suits admirably in the passage Nah. iii. 17 and gives at least a satisfactory sense in Jer. li. 27. The סָפְסָר, who shall be appointed against Babylon, is the scribe who registers the different objects of the booty after the capture of the city.

I conclude this list[1] by a few remarks on the etymology of מָג. Several attempts have been made to explain this name of the מָג or "Magi," its true etymology being expected to throw light on the origin of the magic arts and the nationality of the old Medians, one of whose tribes is called Μάγοι by Herodotus. Some scholars have tried to explain the name by an Aryan etymology, while others

[1] The meaning and etymology of the difficult word מַלְצַר (Dan. i. 11. 16) have been for the first time satisfactorily explained in *Libri Danielis, Ezrae et Nehemiae* ed. S. Baer (Lipsiae 1882), p. xi.

maintain its Semitic origin.[1] It is difficult to conceive how the true origin of that name could have remained so long undiscovered. The passage (Jer. xxxix. 3) which describes the רַב־מָג entering Jerusalem together with the other dignitaries of Nebuchadnezzar, and the well-known fact that Babylonia is the home of magic arts, point alike to the Babylonian origin of the name. Nor are the cuneiform inscriptions deficient in evidence of such origin. The Assyrian *mâḫû* is a synonym of *âšipu*, "sorcerer,"[2] and a text of Asurbanipal's published by George Smith[3] mentions the interpretation of dream-visions as the particular business of the *mâḫê*. The Sumerian form of the word is *magha*, which has passed into Babylonian in the form *mâḫû*, "the right reverend," a name respectfully applied to the Magi by the credulity of the people. This etymology, if accepted, furnishes a remarkable proof that the Hebrew ג in מָג had the adspirated prononciation.

Passing over a host ot successful interpretations of similar names, we may here be permitted to make a few remarks on the Hebrew names of the months, which the Jews borrowed from the Babylonians during the time of their exile. It is indeed fortunate that the Semitic origin of the names נִיסָן, אִיָּר, &c., which the Jews have kept to

[1] Compare Schrader, *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*, 2nd edition (1883), p. 417—421. Schrader's explanation of the word מָג by the Babylonian *ḗmḳu, ḗmgu* "wise" (עמק) has linguistic grounds against it.

[2] Comp. *W. A. I.* ii. 32, 19 with 51, 49, and v. 23, 46. According to these passages *maḫ-ḫu-u* is a synonym of *éš-šé-pu-u (éšépû)* and *âšipu* (אַשָּׁף). Observe further the passage *W. A. I.* ii. 31 No. 5 col. ii, where the name of *mâḫé* is placed next to the ideograms of the sorcerers and the priests.

[3] History of Asurbanipal, p. 128, 95.

the present time, is now established, and that the far-fetched etymologies from the Sanskrit and the Persian may at last be dispensed with. It is, however, equally wrong to explain these Semitic names by the Hebrew or even by the Arabic language, and to do so partly in a manner which defies all principles of sound etymology. Thus, נִיסָן is explained as the "budding month," and compared with Heb. נֵץ, "bud, flower." It appears that Hebrew lexicography in its present state has not yet recognized the absolute necessity of explaining Babylonian words according to the spirit, and by the laws of formation and the vocabulary, of the Babylonian language. Thus נִיסָן (in Babylonian *Nîsânu*), the name of the first month, means undoubtedly "start, beginning" (from *nisû*=Heb. נָסַע), which is also the meaning of תִּשְׁרִי (in Babylonian *Tišrîtu*), the first month of the second half of the year. אִיָּר (Bab. *Airu, Âru*) signifies the bright month, while אֲדָר (Bab. *Addaru*=February—March) is the dull, gloomy month[1], the time from February till March being particularly rainy in Babylonia. The rainy season commences in טֵבֵת (December—January), the month of rain-showers according to Sennacherib's graphic description[2], for Babylonian

[1] The small fragment of a vocabulary which is one of the few Assyrian relics preserved at Zurich is of great importance to the meaning of the word *adâru*. According to this tablet the word is used of the darkening of the moon by clouds as well as of a solar eclipse. The corresponding non-Semitic word is *kan* (see *Assyrische Lesestücke*, 2nd edition, p. 58, l. 21. 22), meaning also "cloud" *(urpitu)*; the Sumerian people called the month of Kislev *iti kankana* as the "cloudy" month.

[2] See Sennach. iv. 75 ff. Sennach. Const. 42 f. Sennacherib is deterred from the pursuit of the Elamite king Kudur-Nachundu by the "fury" *(raggu)* of the torrents coming down from the Elamite mountains, in the month of Tebet.

Ṭêbêtu means the "sinking in water" (from *ṭibû* = Heb. טבע). The devastation of nature occasioned by the incessant rains *(zunnê ša zunnê)* and inundations of the month of Tebet culminates in the month of שְׁבָט, *Šabâṭu*, where the fury of the weather reaches its highest pitch. This circumstance justifies the name *Šabâṭu*, by which the month is characterized as the "destroying" one.[1] In like manner are almost all the other names most satisfactorily explained by the language of the people who first framed them.[2]

The three Babylonian local names compounded with תֵּל, "hill"—namely, תֵּל אָבִיב (Ezek. iii. 15), תֵּל חַרְשָׁא, and תֵּל מֶלַח (Ezra ii. 59; Neh. vii. 61) — are remarkable instances of the danger attending the rash explanation of such Babylonian names by Hebrew. It would be easy to prove that those words cannot mean in Babylonian corn-hill, forest-hill, and salt-hill. The Babyl. חרש never means "forest";

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[1] For the Assyrian stem *šabâṭu* see p. 46. According to his annals (*W. A. I.* iii. 15, col. i. 14), Esarhaddon received the intelligence of the murder of his father Sennacherib in the month of Shebat, while he was stationed in the vicinity of Melitene. It is expressly mentioned that his hasty return to Nineveh was not stopped by the "fury of the storm."

[2] The months of מַרְחֶשְׁוָן (Bab. *araḫ sâmna*, "the eighth month") and of תַּמּוּז (Bab. *Du'úzu*, "the month of the god Tammuz") need no further commentary. The third month, *Sivânu* (סִיוָן), is explained *W. A. I.* ii. 32 as the appointed time (from *sâmu*, סום). According to the cylinder-inscription of king Sargon (see Lyon, *Keilschrifttexte Sargons*, Leipzig 1883, p. 9, l. 58) it is the season appointed by divine authority for the making of bricks and the laying of the foundation of houses and cities, its heat being particularly favourable to this kind of work. The meaning of אָב is less evident. It may, however, be conjectured, that it is the Assyr. *âbu*, "hostile," an appellation fully justified by the excessive heat of this month.

in the numberless passages where it occurs it has invariably the meaning of "mountain-ridge." The translation "forest-hill," current in most Assyriological publications, is founded on a wrong etymology.[1]

These illustrations, which could be easily multiplied, must suffice for the present. Important as they are, they are nevertheless of a more subordinate character. For in all these respects Assyriology does only the same service to the Old Testament as Egyptology has done for Egyptian proper names, though the latter are far inferior in number. The importance of Assyriology to Hebrew lexicography is of a far more solid and comprehensive character.

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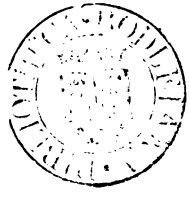
[1] It cannot be denied that the Heb. חֹרֶשׁ means "forest". Both meanings, "forest" and "mountain-ridge," may, however, easily be derived from the stem חרשׁ as explained in *W. A. I.* v. 18. Even in some passages of the Old Testament the meaning "mountain-ridge" is far preferable to that of "forest." Comp. 1 Sam. xxiii. 14 with verse 15, where בָּהָר and בַּחוֹרֶשָׁה exchange places, and especially v. 19, where מְצָדוֹת are mentioned as being בַּחוֹרֶשָׁה. The most instructive passage, however, is 2 Chron. xxvii. 4. The Authorized Version translates: "Moreover he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the *forests* he built castles and towers," but the proper site of castles and towers, which are built for the defence of the country, is not the forest, but the top of the mountain, whence the approach of the enemy can be espied.



III.

THERE may be a diversity of opinion about the exact position which the old language of Babylonia and Assyria occupies among the Semitic sister tongues, but this much is certain, that it is more closely allied to the so-called North Semitic or the Canaanitic and Aramaic dialects than to the South Semitic or the Arabic and Ethiopian languages. It is true that Assyrian exhibits in some respects—as in the sibilants, the careless treatment of the gutturals א, ה, ח, and ע, and some other striking points of agreement in grammar as well as vocabulary[1]—a great family likeness to its Ethiopian sister, but these points of similarity are either remnants of that time when the great Semitic idiom had not yet split into dialects or linguistic phenomena due to similar causes. It would certainly be rash to build upon them the hypothesis of a closer affinity between the two languages, which is amply disproved by the want in Assyrian of the inner plural formation and the peculiar vocabulary of Ethiopic. It is an undisputed fact, on the other hand, that the Assyrian language bears a strong resemblance to Hebrew. The sibilants are the same in both languages.

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[1] Comp. for instance עֹרֶף, Assyr. *kišâdu*, "neck"; צָלַף, Assyr. *ẖalâḳu*, "to perish"; פָּאָה, Assyr. *mâ'u*, "praepollere."

Compare Assyrian *šûru*, "ox," and *ṣabît*, "gazelle," with Hebrew *šôr* and *ṣebîā*, and contrast these words with Arabic *ṯaur*, *ẓabî*, and Aramaic *taurâ*, *ṭabyâ*. Turning to grammar, we find in Assyrian, as in Hebrew, *anâku*, "I" (אָנֹכִי), the conjunctions אִם and אוּלַי, and the adverbial formations in ם, as *annama*, "in vain," Heb. חִנָּם; *pitîma*, "suddenly," Heb. פִּתְאֹם; *mûšâma*, "by night," compare Heb. יוֹמָם, "by day."[1] The use of the tenses is likewise analogous. Heb. יִקְטֹל, with preceding וַ, אָז, and טֶרֶם, is used in the same aoristic sense as in Assyrian, and the Nifal is the passive voice in Hebrew as its corresponding form is in Assyrian. The resemblance is, however, actually overwhelming when we come to compare the vocabulary of the two languages. Leaving aside such words as עַשְׁתֵּי, "one," Assyrian *ištên*, in the known numeral for "eleven,"[2] which were partly borrowed by the Jews during the Babylonian exile, I propose to include in the following list only words which form part, as it were, of the original stock-in-trade of the language: such are *ilu*, "God"; *âibu* or *âbu*, "enemy"; *alpu*, "ox"; *amšatu*, "eve, yesterday"; *asâpu*, "to gather"; *êribû*, "locust"; *arâru*, "to curse"; *êrêšu*, "to betroth" (*êrêšu*, "bridegroom"; *êrêštu*, "bride"); *išpatu*, "quiver"; *ušširu*, "to cause to prosper"; *itimâlî*, *timâlî*, "yesterday"; *bâmâtē*, "high places"; *dâdu*, "the beloved"; *dûdu*, "basket"; *daltu*,

[1] These Assyrian adverbs ending in *ma* decide for ever the question as to the origin of the Heb. ־ם in יוֹמָם, רִיקָם, &c. For the former explanations comp. Stade, ***Lehrbuch der hebräischen Grammatik***, p. 175.

[2] עַשְׁתֵּי־עָשָׂר occurs eighteen times in the Old Testament, viz., eleven times in the exilic or post-exilic books, and six times in Exodus and Numbers in passages forming part of the so-called "Codex of the Priests"; the sole remaining instance being in Deut. i. 3.

"door"; *êrû*, "to be pregnant"; *ḫarâdu*, "to tremble"; *ḫurâṣu*, "gold"; *ṭaṭâpu*, "to encircle" (comp. מְטוֹטָפוֹת); *ya'úru*, *yâṣu*, "river"; *yaṣâru*, "to form"; *kalûtu*, syn. *unûtu*, "vessel"; *bît ki-li*,[1] "prison" (Heb. בֵּית כֶּלֶא); *kirû*, "cistern"; *kirêtu*, "banquet"; *kašâpu*, Piel, "to bewitch"; *lîtû* (*i. e.* לִטְוֹת), "to keep", *e. g.* clothes (comp. Heb. מֶלְתָּחָה, "wardrobe"); *mêkaltu* (*W. A. I.* ii. 38, 19), "brook" (comp. מְרִבָּל, 2 Sam. xvii. 20); *marû*, "to be fat"; *nidbu*, *nindabu*, "freewill offering"; *nînu*, "progeny"; *nasîku*, "prince"; *nâḫidu*, "shepherd"; *sugûlatu*, "property"; *sapâdu*, "to mourn"; *sarâru*, "to be refractory"; *âdu*, "time" (Heb. עוֹד); *êru*, "city"; *êrpitu*, "cloud" (comp. עֲרִיפִים); *pânû*, "face"; *ṣubbu*, "waggon"; *ḫakḫadu*, "crown of the head"; *ḫirbu*, "middle"; *rapû*, "to heal"; *šu'âlu*, "Hades" (Heb. שְׁאוֹל); *šarru*, "prince"; *šarâpu*, "to burn"; *šaḫâlu*, "to roar"; *šîru*, "flesh"; *šalâlu*, "to lead captive"; *šalâpu*, "to draw," *e. g.*, the sword; *šapâtu*, "to judge"; *šuršu*, "root, offshoot"; *târu*, "to turn." Were I to aim at anything like completeness, this list would be found to comprise almost every single root in Hebrew, and to include even peculiar Hebrew phrases, such as טָפַל שֶׁקֶר, in Assyrian *ṭapâlu taškirti*, "to invent a lie"; מִלֵּא יָד, in Assyrian *mullû ḫâtâ*, "to fill the hand of one," *i. e.*, to invest one with an office. As has been recently shown by Franz Delitzsch, the words of the sacerdotal benediction (Num. vi. 26) "The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace," receive a new significance from the common Assyrian phrase "to lift up one's face, one's eyes to any one," *i. e.*, to bestow one's love upon any one.[2]

Of course, though intimately connected, Assyrian and

[1] *W. A. I.* i, 27 No. 2, 36.

[2] See *Zeitschrift für kirchl. Wiss. u. Leben*, Leipzig 1882, p. 125.

Hebrew are by no means identical. Assyrian has, like Hebrew, peculiarities of its own, due chiefly to the fact that it became a literary language at an earlier period than any of its Semitic sister tongues (about 3000 B. C.). We refer here especially to the want of the article and to the rare use of the prepositions בְּ and לְ, *ba* and *la*, which in Assyrian is restricted to the combinations *bašû* and *lapâni*. On the other hand, Hebrew must have undergone some changes before it was fixed in literature. All these peculiarities, however, do not loosen the ties of intimate relationship by which it is bound to its Hebrew sister.

Nor is it difficult to see the reason of such intimate relationship. The striking similarity, both in grammar and vocabulary, which the Assyrian and Babylonian language bears to Hebrew is a natural consequence of the fact that the Babylonian and Hebrew peoples at one time dwelt together in long continued and close intercourse. The subsequent emigration of the latter to Palestine was not calculated to exert an alienating influence on their language, as the original inhabitants of that country spoke a tongue not entirely foreign, and the external conditions of life were very nearly the same in Palestine as in their original home. All these circumstances prove that Assyriology is destined to play a most important part in the history of Hebrew lexicography.

IV.

BEFORE considering the various advantages resulting to the understanding of the Old Testament from this intimate relationship between Assyrian and Hebrew it may be appropriate to mention here an accidental merit of Assyriology which, though secondary, is of very high value. The possession of literary documents dating from periods of the Babylonian and Assyrian empire the most varying in time is certainly no small privilege of Assyriology. By the help of these authentic documents the origin of many hitherto doubtful Hebrew words has been explained, and a wholesome check has been put on the pernicious practice of forcing foreign etymologies upon genuine Semitic words. I am referring here to those Hebrew words concerning which great uncertainty exists whether they are Semitic or borrowed from the Persian or Greek. Thus בִּירָה, "fortress *or* castle," applied to the castle of Susa in the book of Esther, is explained in the ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary by the Persian *bâru*, "wall *or* fortress," and the Greek βάρις. Now *birtu*, "castle," is often to be met with in the inscriptions of Shalmaneser II (860—824 B. C.), as in the black obelisk, l. 34, and occurs about twenty times in the annals of Tiglath-pileser II, Sargon, and Sennacherib. It is, moreover,

mentioned in the dictionaries of the royal library of Nineveh as a synonym of *ḫalṣu*, "fortification," or "fortified place, fortress." Compare *rab birti* and *rab ḫalṣu*, both meaning "governor of a fortress." The Semitic origin of the word is, therefore, no longer doubtful.[1] Again, אִגֶּרֶת, "letter," in the post-exilic books, the usual term applied to official correspondence or decrees issued by the king, is not derived from the Persian *engarîden*, "to write." It is a Semitic word, as is proved by the Assyrian *êgirtu*, the name given to an official letter addressed by an Assyrian officer stationed in the city of Erech to "the king, his lord," probably king Esarhaddon.[2] We meet with the word also elsewhere, as in the lists of synonyms, where *šipirtu*, "missive," is mentioned as a synonym of *êgirtu* (see *W. A. I.* v. 32, 5—7). There is little doubt that these and similar words are of a late date in Hebrew, but

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[1] As a Babylonian word, *birtu* demands of course a Babylonian etymology. It would, therefore, be wrong to connect the word with a root בור. The Babylonian and Assyrian *birtu*, which passed into Hebrew under the form בִּירָה, must be referred to the common Assyrian root *barû* "to bind' (a synonym of *rakâsu*), from which *birîtu* "bond" or "fetters" is derived. *Birtu* denotes a strong fortification and is especially applied to a castle. Compare the passage Khors. 139: *Ušarkis birtam* "I caused a fortress to be built," where *ušarkis* literally means "I caused to be joined together." The Hebrew רְבָסִים "mounds of earth" or "hills," from רָבַס "to bind," has an exact equivalent in the Assyrian *birâtu* "hills," from *barû* "to bind." *Šâdâ u birâti* "mountain and hills" is a phrase of frequent occurrence in the inscriptions, see Sennach. Rass. 87. The Assyrian *ḫalṣu*, "stronghold," a synonym of *birtu*, and the Hebrew חֲלוּץ, "armed" and חֲלָצִים, "loins" are derived from the root חלץ "to be strong", which in both dialects is distinct from the root חלץ, Assyr. *ḫalâṣu*, "to pluck out."

[2] See *W. A. I.* iv. 54 No. 2.

we need not therefore have recourse to Persian or Greek etymologies. Words that occur on the tablets of Asurbanipal's royal library are exempt from the charge of such origin.[1]

As to some other Hebrew words, their foreign origin is disproved by their mere occurrence in Assyrian. It is scarcely credible that the ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary still doubts the Semitic origin of אֳנִי, "ship," and ad-

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[1] The light we gain in this respect from the cuneiform inscriptions is not confined to Hebrew; it extends to Semitic lexicography in general. A considerable number of Targumic and Talmudic words, which Levy derives from the Greek in his dictionaries, occur in the Assyrian and Babylonian language, some in the very oldest documents. אבולא, "city gate"; אסתונא, "north wind"; דפא, "board, plank"; סימא or סימנא, "sign," אָרִיס, "overseeer" or "watchman," which have been too rashly explained by the Greek ἐμβολή, σθένος, δάπεδον, σῆμα and σημεῖον, οὖρος, have their ancient Assyrian equivalents in *abûlu*, *istânu*, *dappu*, *simtu*, *simânu* and *urâsu* (for the latter word see Asurn. ii. 90. 100). The Aramaic *laftâ*, "carrot," which, in spite of its genuine Semitic type (from לפת, "to wind"), has been derived from the Greek ῥάπυς, occurs in the form *lapti* in a small Babylonian tablet containing about seventy names of plants, which the Babylonian king *Mardukbal-iddina* ordered to be set in certain sections of his garden *(gannâti)*. Among the plants there enumerated we find also such names as *bukîu*, *yarḳânu*, "vegetables," *ku-uk-ka-ni-tum*, *i. e.*, *ḳâḳânîtu* (from an Assyrian stem קוק, synonymous with *saḫâru* and *lapâtu*, "to wind" comp. the well-known קִיקָיוֹן in the book of Jonah), *lišân kalbu*, (comp. Arabic لِسَانُ الكَلْب), and *pikkâti* (פִּקּוּעָה). Even words the foreign etymology of which seemed to be tolerably certain have vindicated their Semitic character. Thus the Aramaic אִדְרוֹן, אֻדְּנָא, "chamber," which is generally compared to the Persian *enderûn*, is proved to be Semitic by the Assyrian *idrânu*, "dark chamber" or "room," derived from אדר, "to be dark"; comp. *Addaru*, "the dark month," in chapter ii.

mits the possibility of an Egyptian etymology. All doubt is removed by the Assyrian *unûtu*, pl. *unâti*, "utensil, vessel," a synonym of *kalû*, *kalûtu*, Hebrew כְּלִי, "vessel," also "boat," as in Is. xviii. 2. If we except the geographical names and the proper names, including the title Pharaoh, there is hardly a single word of certain Egyptian origin to be found in the vocabulary of the old Hebrew language.[1] The word of which the Egyptian origin seemed to be most certain is the well-known אַבְרֵךְ in Gen. xli. 43, of which there are about ten different explanations from the old Egyptian and Coptic languages, the most plausible of them being Benfey's *a-bor-k*, "fall down." It ought not to be forgotten, however, that this word, called out before Joseph riding in the royal chariot and adorned with all the insignia of a grand vizier, might just as well be his title, as is, indeed, the opinion of many ancient and modern translators, who render it, like Luther in the last edition of his version (issued 1545), "*Landesvater*" *(pater tenerrimus*, רך, *patriae*, in

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[1] Even יְאוֹר, "river" or "channel," which is commonly regarded as an Egyptian word and explained by the Egyptian *aur* "Nile," is undoubtedly a genuine Hebrew word. This opinion is supported by the passage Job xxviii. 10, where יְאֹרִים means "fountains in the rocks" or, according to some commentators, "subterraneous passages hewn out in the rocks." See also my remarks in *Paradies*, p. 312. The Assyrian form of the word, *ya'ûrê* "streams," occurs in an inscription of Ramannirari I (c. 1320 B. C.). Another derivative of the same root יאר or ואר, which I believe means "to send," may be seen in the large inscription of Nebuchadnezzar (col. vi. 46), where the vast ocean *ti'âmtu gallatu*, is called *ya-ar-ri*, *i. e.*, *yâri marti* "the bitter stream" on account of its salt-water. The Hebrew name of the Nile, יְאֹר (Assyr. *Yaru-'u-u*), is probably an adaptation of the Egyptian word to the good Semitic name for "stream," *ya'ûru*, *yâru*, יְאֹר.

the *Enarrationes).* Luther comments on the word as follows: "As for the meaning of *abrech*, we will let the grumblers search till doomsday. Let us meanwhile understand it as we have rendered it in German."[1] We will not grumble about this word nor try to increase the number of hypotheses, but no one can expect us to break our Assyrian tablets and shut our eyes intentionally against the light. It is a fact which, in spite of Schrader *(Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*, p. 152), cannot be disputed, that *abarakku* is the Assyrian name of the grand vizier, that high official who holds also the office of eponym, and, together with the *turtân*, is the highest dignitary of the empire—higher in rank than the *šalaṭ*, or head of all provincial governors. His ideographic form characterizes him as "the friend of the king." The reading of his well known ideogram, which is composed of the two signs *ši* and *um*, as *abarakku* is confirmed by the tablet Sm. 61, where, among a number of charming Sumerian and Assyrian proverbs, we read: *Nadânu ša šarri tubbû ša šâḳê*, "The liberality of the king ensures the liberality of the magnate"; and *Nadânu ša šarri dummuḳu ša abarakki* (in Sumerian *Sima lugalâkit šaga šêâkit)*, "The liberality of the king ensures the benevolence of the *abarakku*," an exact equivalent of the English proverb "Like master like man." Also the feminine *abarakkatu* is applied to goddesses as the highest administrators of the sanctuary.[2] As has already been seen by others, the original meaning of the Babylonian *abarakku* is "father of the king," analogous with the Turkish title *ata-*

[1] *"Was Abrech heisse, lassen wir die Zänker suchen bis an den jüngsten Tag; wollens dieweil verstehen, wie es gedeutscht ist."*

[2] Compare, for instance, *W. A. I.* iv. 63, 15.

bek, "father-prince," and δεύτερος πατήρ, according to the Septuagint a name given to Haman as grand vizier of Artaxerxes.[1]

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[1] Those who object to this explanation of אַבְרֵךְ on the ground that a Babylonian word is not likely to occur in the history of Joseph may be reminded of חַרְטֻמִּים, a word common both to the Egyptian episodes in Genesis and Exodus and to the book of Daniel (i. 20 and ii. 2).

V.

We now proceed to consider the immediate advantages resulting to the understanding of the Old Testament from the close affinity between Assyrian and Hebrew.

Most of the so-called ἅπαξ λεγόμενα and such words as chance to occur rarely in the Old Testament have presented special difficulties to commentators. Thanks to the enormous extent and great variety of the monumental literature of Assyria these difficulties are considerably diminished. The Assyrian texts often furnish us with plentiful illustrations of these difficult words, and sometimes support textual readings which some commentators in their perplexity had tried to emendate. Thus, to quote a few instances, various explanations have been proposed for the expression אַבְחַת־חֶרֶב in Ezek. xxi. 20 (verse 15 of the Authorized Version): "I have set *the point of the sword* against all their gates." The translation "point of the sword" is merely guessed from the context. Hardly more successful is the rendering, based on the Arabic بَبْخ, "threat of the sword" or "threatening sword." Smend, the latest expositor of Ezekiel's prophecies, following Abu'l-Walîd, translates "fulgor of the sword."[1] The context requires

[1] Smend, *Der Prophet Ezechiel* (Leipzig 1880), p. 141.

some such rendering as "slaughter," which is actually the translation to be found in the Septuagint (σφάγια ῥομφαίας) and in the Targumim. The question whether this translation is due to a mere guess or based on the textual emendation טִבְחָה חֶרֶב is here immaterial. That both versions have hit the true sense is proved by the Assyrian *abâḫu*, a synonym of *ṭabâḫu*, "to slaughter," from which *nâbaḫu*, "rack," a synonym of *makâṣu* (from *kâṣu*, "to flay"), is derived.[1]

One of the many Assyrian names for "trap" or "snare" is *ṣaddu*. We meet with the word in the bilingual text *W. A. I.* iv. 26 No. 2, where we read: *ṣaddu ina pât kišti ritû, šêtu šuparrûrtu* (or *sapâru*) *ša ana tâmtim tarṣu, itâni ša nûnu ul uṣṣû*, *i. e.* "a trap placed at the edge of the forest, a ned spread out over the sea, a net which allows no fish to escape." The meaning "trap" is secured not only by the context, but also by the non-Semitic equivalent *ǵul-sar*, *i. e.*, "evil sling." I mention this word[2] because it appears to me of great importance to a right understanding of the passage Jud. ii. 3: "and they (the peoples) shall be unto you לְצִדִּים, and their gods shall be a snare (לְמוֹקֵשׁ) unto you." It is beyond our comprehension how the ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary can approve of Bachmann's translation: "they shall be unto you as "sides," *i. e.*, "neighbours pressing on all sides." The Authorized Version, evidently guided by passages like Num. xxxiii. 55, translates:

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[1] See *W. A. I.* ii. 23, 9.

[2] Compare also Sarg. Cyl. 57, where the moongod is called *mušaklim ṣaddê*, *i. e.*, he who reveals by his shining light the snares placed by the demons in the dark recesses of the earth to the destruction of men. See, for instance, *W. A. I.* iv. 16 No. 2.

"they shall be *as thorns* in your sides." The words "*as thorns*," which are printed in italics, prove that the translators felt the difficulty of the expression and tried to remove it. There can be no doubt, that צִדִּים is the Hebrew equivalent of the Assyrian *ṣaddu*: צִדִּים means, therefore, "traps," as is already indicated by the *parallelismus membrorum*, and the passage is to be translated: "they shall be unto you *as traps*, and their gods shall be a snare unto you."[1]

Passing over other instances like the verb זרב Job vi. 17, whose meaning "to burn" or "to scorch" is based on the wrongly assumed connexion with צרב and שׂרף, or חכה Deut. xxxiii. 3, which Assyrian proves to be a synonym of נשׂא[2], I conclude this series of illustrations by a few remarks on the Hebrew nouns אֶשֶׁד and אֲשַׁדָּה. These words are generally combined with the Syriac ܐܫܕ, "to pour out" or "to shed." In accordance with this etymology, אֶשֶׁד הַנְּחָלִים Num. xxi. 15 is translated "the stream of the brooks." This meaning, though appropriate in the passage just quoted, cannot be applied to passages like Deut. iii. 17. iv. 49 (אַשְׁדֹּת הַפִּסְגָּה). The ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary translates in Num. xxi. 15 "the pouring forth of the brooks" *(Ergiessung der Bäche)*, but adopts the reasonable rendering "under the slope of the Pisga" in the passages of Deuteronomy. The Assyrian *išdu*, Plur. *išdâti*,

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[1] Like the Heb. צַד, the Assyr. *ṣaddu* means also "side," for instance, the back of a chair is called *ṣaddu*. The stem is צדד, "to encircle" or "to surround," from which both meanings, "side" as well as "snare," may easily be derived.

[2] Observe how closely the two words follow each other in the passage Deut. xxxiii. 3.

"base" of anything, shows that "slope" or "foot of the mountain" is the proper meaning of אֲשְׁדָּה. *Išdu* is used of the foundation of a house, of the base of a throne and the lower part of the sky; compare, for instance, the hymn *W. A. I.* iv. 20 No. 2, where the rising sun is adressed: *Šamaš ina išid šâmê tappuḫa, i. e.* "Oh Samas, thou hast come forth from the horizon of the heavens."

VI.

THE names of animals, plants, and precious stones, which constitute a separate class of words among the ἅπαξ λεγόμενα and words of rare occurrence in the Old Testament, may be conveniently discussed in a special chapter. An invaluable aid is here afforded by the extensive lists of names of animals, plants, and precious stones, which the industry of the Assyrian scribes has bequeathed to us. We feel persuaded that these lists, when completed by future discoveries, will one day prove a rich mine of Semitic lexicography, in as much as the synonymous words which they contain and the ideograms or Sumerian symbols which they explain embody valuable suggestions as to the true meaning of these obscure words. The ideograms by which these names are designated usually express the characteristics of the respective animals or objects which they represent. Thus it is easy to see that the bird *kililu (kulili)*, which is characterized by its ideogram as one riding on the trees, must be the woodpecker. Again, such designations as "bird of the night," "queen of the river side," "golden bird," "star-eyed bird," "bird of the thornbush," "bird of the caves," "long-leg," "smasher of bones," which we gather from their respective ideograms, greatly aid us in identifying the animals in question. Some of the unclean birds specified

in Levit. xi. are also included in these lists. Thus אַנָפָה, verse 19, occurs in the form *anpatu* (*W. A. I.* v. 27, 38 d), and means, according to its ideogram, "the bird of the light" (*iṣṣûr nûri*). If we may venture to identify the ideogram of this bird with that occurring *W. A. I.* i. 28, 24 a. Asurn. iii. 49, the *anpatu* was hunted by the Assyrian kings on the right bank of the Euphrates near Karkemish. Asurnazirpal boasts of having captured with his own hand twenty of these birds.[1]

It has been long supposed that the bird כּוֹס mentioned in Pss. cii. 7 as dwelling on ruins, is a species of owls. The Assyrian lists of birds confirm this supposition. *Kasûsu* is there given as a synonym of the non-Semitic *surdû*, "bird of the night," which is borrowed from the Accadian (*W. A. I.* ii. 37, 15. 64 b. c).[2] It is worthy of note that Onkelos translates כּוֹס (Lev. xi. 17. Deut. xiv. 16) by קַדְיָא, which occurs in the form *ḳadû* (syn. *âkû*), in the list just quoted immediately before the explanation of *kasûsu*.

Another zoological name of very doubtful meaning on which light is now thrown by the Assyrian monuments is אוֹחִים[3], occurring in the pathetic description of the future

[1] The Targumim render אַנָפָה by אַבְנִירָתָא and אַבּוּ, translations which are of little use as we are unacquainted with the meaning of these words. I may here mention that אַבְנִירָתָא occurs *W. A. I.* ii. 37, 34 c in the form *ibnîtu* as a synonym of *dûdu*, not of *anpatu*. Unfortunately the ideogram is not perfectly preserved.

[2] The ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary combines כּוֹס with כִּיס, "bag", and mentions the obsolete explanation of Bochart, according to which כּוֹס is the pelecan, as the bird which has a bag attached to its head. I am of opinion that כּוֹס is a form like הוֹב.

[3] The meaning of רְאֵם, which falls under the same category, has been already discussed on p. 6.

desolation of Babylon in Isaiah xiii. 21. The translation of the Authorized Version, which vaguely renders it by "doleful creatures," is not satisfactory. This ἅπαξ λεγόμενον is generally translated by "owls" and derived from a supposed stem אחח, "to howl." There is no equivalent in the kindred dialects, except in Assyrian. The Assyrian *âḫû* (syn. *barbaru)* is, however, not a bird, but a wild quadruped described as sacred to the god of fire, and feared on account of its haunting the farmer's courtyard to carry off kids. Its name *âḫû* characterizes the animal as the evil one. It is most likely the jackal.[1]

Among the names of plants, of which some of these lists consist, one is of especial interest to us, being the Assyrian equivalent of the Hebrew חֲבַצֶּלֶת. The name *ḫabaṣillatu* occurs in the list *W. A. I.* v. 32 No. 4, containing all the different kinds of *ḳânû*, "reed," and of objects made of it. The corresponding ideogram characterizes it as *šûšu*, *ziḳpu* or *pirḫu ša ḳânê*, *i. e.* "the stalk of the reed."[2] The

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[1] Houghtons interpretation of *âḫû* by "hyena" (see Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology, vol. v. p. 328), which is adopted by Cheyne, is based on the erroneous supposition, that the ideogram *ur-bara* means "the beast (dog) stripped." We know now, that *bara* is the non-Semitic equivalent of *âḫû*, "evil" or "hostile" (see *W. A. I.* iv. 10, 27—28b, where *bara* (sic!) *šabâzu* is translated by *libbuki a-ḫu-u;* the following words are to be read: *ana ašrišu litûr).* The jackal is written *ur-bara*, *i. e.*, the evil dog, just as the lion is written *ur-maḫa*, *i. e.*, the big dog.

[2] The ideogram *šê-du* (or *ru*) occurs both with the determinatives of wood and of reed, sometimes without either (see *W. A. I.* iv. 7, 56a. Paul Haupt, *Akkadische und sumerische Keilschrifttexte*, p. 124, l. 16). Its invariable meaning is "that which shoots up from the root of a plant"; it is contrasted by *šuršu*, "root," and by *šubultu*, "ear" (of corn). Mr. Theo. G. Pinches (see Athenaeum, 2. June, 1883)

usual translations, which waver between lily, narcissus, rose, and crocus (comp. חַבַּצֶּלֶת, "meadow-saffran, *colchicum autumnale)*, are mainly based on the supposed connexion of חַבַּצֶּלֶת with בָּצָל, "onion," and can, therefore, no longer be entertained. The two passages (Isaiah xxxv. 1 and Cant. ii. 1), where חַבַּצֶּלֶת occurs, are to be translated, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and *sprout like the reed*"; "I am *the reed* of Sharon and the lily of the valley." Observe especially the passage in Isaiah, where particular stress is laid on the germinating (פרח) of the reed. According to its ideogram and in full agreement with this passage in Isaiah, the Assyr. *ḫabaṣillatu* means *pirḫu ša ḫânê*. Though it is not impossible that *ḫabaṣillatu*, חַבַּצֶּלֶת, may be a particular species of reed, it is extremely improbable, the explanation by *lubšu ša ḫânê*, *i. e.*, "husk (lit. garment) of the reed," conveying too general a sense to admit of a more definite

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erroneously supposes that I misread *šûšu* for *lubšu*, which is mentioned, together with *ḫabbûru* and *udîtu*, as a synonym of *ḫabaṣillatu* in the text above quoted. It is not probable that any Assyriologist would ever mistake the sign *šu* for *lub*, least of all on a tablet so clearly written as *W. A. I.* v. 32 No. 4. The synonyms *šûšu* and *ziḳpu* are taken from *W. A. I.* v. 26, 29 e. f., 27 g. h. The lines 26. 27 g. h. prove that the non-Semitic *šê-du* (or *ru*) is as general a term as the Assyrian *pirḫu*, which is explained by twenty-one synonyms on the tablet K. 4375, published in part *W. A. I.* ii. 23. — I may here suggest that *šûšu* is probably connected with שׁוֹשַׁנָּה, "lily." If this suggestion be correct, the lily would derive its Hebrew name, not from the whiteness of its flower (comp. שֵׁשׁ, "white marble"), but from the stiff, reed-like appearance of its stalk. As to *ḫabbûru*, I doubt the correctness of the opinion advanced by Mr. Pinches, that the word is borrowed from the Accadian, *ḫabûru* being a synonym of *labšu* according to *W. A. I.* v. 28. *Udîtu* is the feminin form of *ud*, the name of a special kind of aromatic reed.

application. Besides, the general meaning "reed" fits admirably in the passages quoted.

Another botanical name of high interest occurring in the list of plants ordered to be set by king Merodachbaladan (see p. 24, footnote) is *ḫambaḳûku*, the Assyrian equivalent of the name of the prophet חֲבַקּוּק, the more correct form of which would be חַבָּקוּק (LXX Ἀμβακούμ, Ἀμβακούκ). Other instances of names of plants used as proper names will readily occur to every student of the Old Testament.

Less substantial is the help to be obtained from the Assyrian monuments for the names of precious stones mentioned in the Old Testament. Still, it is interesting to know that names like יַשְׁפֵּה (Ex. xxviii. 20; xxxix. 13; Ezek. xxviii. 13) and סַחֲרֶת (Esth. i. 6) occur in the Assyrian vocabularies and other texts in the forms *âšpû (W. A. I.* v. 30, 60 h) and *siḫru (siḫirtu?* ii. 21, 9 d).[1] Many of the ideograms, by which, in Assyrian, the precious stones are designated, convey too vague a sense to assist in the identification of the objects intended. Thus, the ideogram of *šubû*, the Assyrian equivalent of שְׁבוֹ (Ex. xxviii. 19. xxxix. 12), denotes the shining or the precious stone *(abnu naṣḳu* or *abnu aḳru)* κατ' ἐξοχήν. If we compare, however, the hymn published in our *Assyrische Lesestücke*, 2nd edition, p. 73 ss.,

[1] As to the אַחְלָמָה, mentioned along with the שְׁבוֹ in the passage Exodus xxviii. 19, we submit the following explanation. Starting from the well known fact, that many precious stones received their names from the countries where they are found, it is not improbable that אַחְלָמָה is the stone found in the country of *Aḫlamû*, which is often mentioned in the Babylonian and Assyrian texts as an Armenian people and district. This conjecture is countenanced by the circumstance that Sennacherib repeatedly praises Armenia and the adjacent countries of Naïri as a rich mine of certain precious stones; see *W. A. I.* i. 7, No. E. 44, 72 ss.

where Istar, the goddess of the morning star, is described as "arising over the earth like a fire" and "adorned with *šubî*-stones," or if we remember that the channel of Tammuz is written by the same ideogram with the determinative "river," we perceive at once that *šubû*, שְׁבוֹ, must be a stone of light colour like the topas. Thus, the usual rendering "achat" becomes rather improbable. It is a point of extreme interest, that the hymn *W. A. I.* iv. 18 No. 3 mentions by name, as it seems, twelve precious stones of transcendent splendour, "enchased in gold and destined to adorn the shining breast of the king," the "precious stone" κατ' ἐξοχήν, the *šubû* or *nisiktu*, being, of course, amongst them.

VII.

It has been already pointed out by Cheyne, in his excellent commentary upon the prophecies of Isaiah (vol. ii, 1882, p. 160 f.), that the common rendering of the Hebrew root זבל by "to dwell" can no longer be maintained. Owing to the unsatisfactory translation of יִזְבְּלֵנִי, Leah's words after being delivered of her sixth son Zebulon, in Gen. xxx. 20, "God hath endued me with a good dowry; now *will* my husband *dwell with me*, because I have born him six sons," do not give a good sense. Cheyne rightly remarks that "the word is commonly so rendered, not to suit the context, but in obedience to a prejudice as to the meaning of זְבוּל." The latter word is usually translated by "dwelling," and זבל is thought to be a denominative verb of it. The ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary states that "it occurs in all dialects only as a denominative verb." The incorrectness of this statement is proved by Arabic, and especially by the Assyrian language. In Assyrian *zabâlu* is a very common synonym of *našû* (Heb. נשׂא), "to lift, to raise, to bear,"—the very meaning, as St. Guyard has shown[1], wanted in the passage above quoted. The translation "Now will my husband *exalt* or *honour* me" not

[1] See *Journal Asiatique. août-sept.* 1878, pp. 220 ff.

only suits the context, but agrees in substance with the rendering of the Septuagint, αἱρετιεῖ με, "he will prefer me." Light is also thrown by Assyrian on the meaning of זְבוּל itself. The original meaning of that word is not "dwelling" in general, but "elevated *or* high dwelling." It is, therefore, especially applied to the heavenly dwelling-places of the sun and the moon (see Hab. iii. 11) and to the high temple of God. "How suitably does Solomon, after alluding to Jehovah's dwelling in thick clouds, refer to the newly built temple as a בֵּית זְבוּל, 'a house of height' (1 Kings viii. 13), a house which by its elevation pointed men upwards to the heavenly temple!" (Cheyne.)[1]

Again, Hebrew דֶּגֶל means "banner"; but what is the meaning of the verb דגל (Psalm xx. 6; Cant. v. 10)? The modern lexicographers and interpreters say that דֶּגֶל is derived from the Arabic دَجَلَ, "to cover," the banner being "the cover of the stick," and that the Hebrew דגל is again a denominative verb, meaning "to erect a banner" or "to provide with a banner."[2] Now, in the first place, it does not seem very probable that the banner should have been called in any language "cover of the flagstick." In the second place, the rendering of דְּגוּל by "one provided with a banner" in Cant. v. 10, "My beloved is white and ruddy, conspicuous among ten thousand like a man provided with a banner," is most unnatural. The general import of דְּגוּל, which the Authorized Version translates well "the chiefest,"

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[1] The non-Semitic name of the famous temple of Bel in Babylon, *E-sagila*, has just the same meaning as Hebr. בֵּית זְבוּל; comp. *W. A. I.* ii. 15, 45 c. d.

[2] Fürst's explanation, who ascribes the meaning "to shine, to exalt" to the Hebrew stem דגל, would be far preferable.

is clear, but what is the original meaning? Assyriology solves the riddle. In Assyrian the banner is likewise called *diglu*. We read in a hymn addressed to the sungod, "Thou art the light of the furthermost ends of heaven, thou art the banner *(diglu)* of the vast earth; the vast nations look upon thee and rejoice."[1] The verb from which *diglu* is derived occurs hundreds of times in the Assyrian texts, its simple meaning being "to see." The banner is, therefore, the object to which the eyes of the soldiers are directed—undoubtedly a far better explanation than "cover of the flagstick." דְּגוּל in Cant. v. 10 is, therefore, to be translated, "My beloved is *looked up to* among ten thousand"—among ten thousand the eyes of every one are directed only to him. In the same manner the translation of the parenthetic words in Psalm xx. 6, expressing the cheerful confidence of the believer in Jehovah's name and help, "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners," had better be replaced by "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and *keep our eyes directed upon the name* of our God." The passage forcibly reminds one of an oracle sent to the king Esarhaddon from the goddess of Arbela: "Do not trust in men, direct thy eyes upon me, *dugulánî*, *i. e.*, look upon me, keep thy eyes directed upon my name."[2]

Another verb that has been explained in the most divergent manner is כמר (see Gen. xliii. 30; Lam. v. 10), from which the names of the heathen priest (כֹּמֶר) and of

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[1] *W. A. I.* iv. 19 No. 2. The Assyrian words are: *attâma nûršunu ša kippât šâmê rûḳûtum, ša irṣitim rapaštim digilšina attâma; inaṭalâkâma iḫâdâ nišê rapšâtē.*

[2] *W. A. I.* iv. 68, col. ii: *ina êli amêlûti lâ tatâkil, mutuḳ înâka ana âši, dugulánî.*

the net (מִכְמֶרֶת) are derived. The last edition of Gesenius's dictionary, partly following the Septuagint, gives three different meanings to this one root: firstly, "to hide," by which מִכְמֶרֶת, "net," is explained as the object hidden in the water or on the earth; secondly, "to be dark or black," by which כֹּמֶר, "priest," is interpreted to mean originally "blackness," then the "dark-dressed man" (Gesenius, "qui atra veste incedit, lugens, hinc asceta, sacerdos"); thirdly, "to contract," therefore, Gen. xliii. 30, "His bowels were drawn together towards his brother." The two different meanings thus ascribed to one and the same form, נִכְמַר, and the etymological explanation of its derivatives, will hardly satisfy any critical reader. How plain and simple becomes the difficulty by the comparison of the Assyrian dictionary! The verb *kamâru* occurs very often on the Assyrian monuments, meaning everywhere "to strike down, to throw down, to overpower." An Assyrian vocabulary which we have lately examined shows that *kamâru* is a synonym of *dakû* (דכא, דכה) and *labânu* (comp. the phrase *labân appi*, "to throw down the face, to adore"). By applying this meaning to the Hebrew passages in question every difficulty is removed. Who can deny that the following translations are at once the most simple and the most satisfactory? Gen. xliii. 30: "And Joseph made haste; for *his love was overpowered towards* his brother, and he sought where to weep."[1] 1 Kings iii. 26: "Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for *her love was overpowered towards* her child," &c. Hos. xi. 8: "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?.....mine heart is turned within

[1] רַחֲמִים means love as well as bowels; the following passage Hos. xi. 8 teaches that it had better be taken in the former sense.

me, *my sympathy* (not "repenting") *is totally overpowered.*" Turning to the explanation of the passage Lam. v. 10, it will be remembered that images taken from the oven are not unfrequently used in Assyrian proverbs. Thus we read[1] *Kîma tinûri lâbiri ana nukkurika mariṣ*, "Like an old oven he is too weak to do thee much harm," *i. e.*, like an oven he has no strength, or, in accordance with the Eastern custom, like a pot the sides of which are burst by too long use and by exposure to violent heat, he is powerless. The passage in Lam. v. 10 is therefore to be translated "Our skin *has been overpowered* like an oven," *i. e.*, has become powerless, or lost its vigour and power of resistance, "by the burning of the famine." Finally, as to the name of the net and the heathen priest, the former is called מִכְמֶרֶת as the instrument by which the prey is overpowered or thrown down (compare the frequent Assyrian phrase "Like a net *aṣḫup-šu*," "I threw him down," from סחף); while the priests, or כְּמָרִים, are the persons who throw themselves down on their faces and adore (comp. סגד and *labân appi*). The Syriac ܟܡܪܐ, "sad, dejected," confirms the correctness of my view.

In the same manner other Hebrew verbs of frequent occurrence, for instance סוּת[2], could be explained, not by any hypothesis, but merely by following the invaluable vocabularies of the old Babylonian and Assyrian scholars as well as the context.

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[1] *W. A. I.* ii. 16, 10—13 d.

[2] The verb נהל has been already discussed on p. 5.

VIII.

HEBREW lexicography is bound to look for help to the Assyrian dictionary chiefly in those cases where a verbal root is only preserved in derivatives. In the majority of these cases Hebrew lexicography is quite unable to give the original meaning of a word. Thus we know that חֹתֵן is the father-in-law, but we cannot tell why he is so called, the verb חתן occurring only as a denominative verb. Again, we know that שֵׁבֶט means "staff," but we are quite in the dark about the original meaning of the root שבט. Of course, no blame of any kind attaches to Hebrew lexicography for having recourse in such cases to the kindred dialects. What I do censure is the indiscreet use made of Arabic, the pernicious practice of forcing Arabic meanings on Hebrew words with an obviously different sense, an error which is greatly aggravated by the bold confidence with which these etymological speculations are put forward. Could any linguist, however little acquainted with the laws of comparative philology, think it possible that the eighth edition of Gesenius's dictionary proposes in right earnest the following development of meanings for חֹתֵן, "father-in-law"? חָתַן, like the Arabic خَتَنَ, means "to circumcise," and, further, "to incise, to penetrate, to go into" another

family. Both, father-in-law and mother-in-law, are called חֹתֵן and חֹתֶנֶת, because through the marriage of their daughters they press, or gain entrance, into another family. Is it possible to conceive such a strange idea? And is it not to be regretted that young beginners in Hebrew, who look upon Gesenius's dictionary as their safest guide, are thus misled, and that ideas of so preposterous a character are instilled into their minds concerning "Semitic modes of thought"?[1] Arabic scholars are perfectly justified in rejecting all those hazardous explanations of Assyrian words by the Arabic dictionary[2]; but why do they not stop, for the sake of Semitic science in general, such an abuse of Arabic in the treatment of Hebrew? The Assyrian language, which, as we have seen, is not only intimately related to Hebrew, but possesses a literature three times larger than the Old Testament, supplies all these verbal stems which are wanted, showing them in living use in numerous instances. The truth of this statement will be fully proved by our Assyrian dictionary, which, we hope, will demonstrate conclusively that the sacred tongue of David and

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[1] Compare what is said in the preface of the eighth edition of Gesenius's dictionary about the "*Semitischen Vorstellungskreise.*" We remark with satisfaction that the ninth edition has given up the above mentioned explanation of the name of the parents-in-law. According to the ninth edition they are thus called as those who decide, the decision as to which husband their daughter is to be given being left to them.

[2] As *ablu*, "son," by هَبِلَ, "to be childless"; *sîtu*, "the other," *sittu*, "the rest," by اِسْتْ; *ma'âltu*, "bed," by مَيْل, "inclination," *puḫru*, "total number" or "body" (of people), by بَحْر, "sea," &c.

Isaiah has no longer need to languish in the fetters of Arabic lexicography.[1]

The Assyrian verb *ḫatânu*, from which the words for affinity are derived, meant originally "to surround, to protect." The Assyrian magician sees in a dream the king Asurbanipal fighting in the midst of his enemies, but he sees at the same time the goddess Istar protecting him and surrounding him *(ḫâtinat)* on every side.[2] The verb *ḫatânu* is very common in the sense of "to protect, to help, to support"[3]; the parents-in-law are called חֹתֵן and חֹתֶנֶת as

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[1] The excessive comparison of Arabic has frequently induced the continuators of Gesenius's work to set aside the correct views of the original compiler, which are often confirmed by the evidence of Assyrian research. Thus, the Hebrew name of the mule, פֶּרֶד, is explained in the two last editions of the dictionary by the Arabic فَلَذَ, "to be single" or "to live apart," the mule being called פֶּרֶד as the isolated animal, incapable of propagating itself. Gesenius rejects this explanation as well as the improbable opinion of Bochart ("quia natus sit ex parentibus qui a consorte naturali *separati* cum alienis copulentur") with the judicious remark: "Utrumque longius petitum est." According to his own view, the mule derived its Hebrew name from its extreme celerity. This etymology, which is based on the comparison of the Syriac ܦܪܕ, "to fly, to flee," is further strengthened by Assyr. *parâdu*, "to be impetous," from which the well-known noun and adjective *purîdu*, "impetuosity, vehemence, power" and "impetous, quick" is derived; comp. *W. A. I.* iv. 5, 47 b: "the messenger *ana Ea purîdu illik* went speedily to the god Ea." For analogous change of the two meanings "powerful" and "quick" comp. Heb. מְאֹד 1 Sam. xx. 19.

[2] Smith, Asurbanipal p. 125 f.: *ina kirimmiša ṭâbti taḫṣinkâma taḫtēna gimir lânêka, pânûša išâtu innapiḫ ezziš ana kašâd nâkirêka, &c., i. e.*, „by her fair body she shielded thee and encompassed thee on all sides; out of her face fire was kindled to vanquish thy enemies," &c.

[3] See *W. A. I.* ii. 39, 2 f. Sarg. Cyl. 4 and other passages.

those who protect and support the young family. That this explanation is in harmony with "Semitic thought" is confirmed by the synonyms חָם, "father-in-law," חֲמוֹת, "mother-in-law," which are derived from the same verb חמה, "to surround," as חוֹמָה, "the surrounding and protecting wall."

Why is the stick called שֵׁבֶט in Hebrew? Gesenius's dictionary combines the word, without putting any query, with the Arabic سَبِطَ, "to be lank" (of the hair). It cannot be questioned that a stick or a rod, especially one used for punishment, may be "lank"; still, this etymology must now be given up, because Assyrian shows clearly that *šibṭu*, "the stick," is derived from *šabâṭu*, "to strike, to beat, to slay," the stick being the instrument of beating.[1] We may add that Fürst, aided by the Targumic and Talmudic idiom, has already proposed this etymology.

Like all Semites, the Hebrew people called the flock, both of sheep and goats, צאן. We did not know why, because no Semitic language has the verb צאן in living use. The latest editions of Gesenius's dictionary think it probable that the name of the flock is to be compared with the Arabic ضَنِيَ, "to be small, sick, emaciate." Poor Semitic people! Indeed, if anything could point to the desert as their original home, small and emaciated sheep and goats would do so. The Babylonians and Assyrians, like the other Semitic nations, called the flock *ṣênu*, but they have

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[1] For the verb *šabâṭu*, "to beat, to slay, to kill" compare *W. A. I.* iv. 16, 9 b; 27, 21 b. Assyr. *Šibṭu* means both, "scepter" and "slaughter."

preserved at the same time the verb צאן in numerous passages. It is one of the most common synonyms of *ṭâbu*, "to be good, benevolent,"[1] the flock being called *ṣênu* because of the tameness and gentleness of the animals composing it; this is real "Semitic thought," as is shown by the Arabic نَعَم.

The verbal root ערשׁ, from which עֶרֶשׂ, "bed," is derived, is not preserved in Hebrew. The word is generally compared to the Arabic عَرْش, "booth" or "shed" or "throne"; عَرِيش, "wooden structure made for a grape vine"; and عَرَشَ, "to erect a *ʿarš* or *ʿarîš*." עֶרֶשׂ is therefore explained as a bed having a canopy, or a booth made of branches, in which people used to sleep during the hot summer months, and J. Löw[2] thinks that he can trace this meaning in Cant. i. 16. עֶרֶשׂ means, however, only "couch" or "bed," and the Syriac ܥܪܣܐ has the additional sense of "bier." It is certainly very improbable that the Hebrews, Babylonians, and Aramaeans had such luxuries as four-post beds at that remote period when they still dwelt together. Also in Assyrian *iršu* or *êršu* is "bed," and the verbal root *êrêšu* means, like *rapâdu* (רָפַד), "sternere," or "to spread out." עֶרֶשׂ is, therefore, simply "stratum."

To quote some other instances, Hebrew lacks the verbal root from which שְׁדָה, "beloved" (Eccles. ii. 8), is derived. We have already shown in another place that

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[1] Compare our remarks in Wilhelm Lotz, *Die Inschriften Tiglathpilesers I*, p. 86 f.

[2] *Aramäische Pflanzennamen*, p. 89.

Assyrian possesses a root שדד, "to love," from which *šudâdu*, "lover," is derived. The ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary, though taking notice of this etymology of שָׂדָה, keeps to the old explanation, according to which the word meant originally "lady," and is to be compared to the Arabic سَيِّدَة. The same edition alleges also the Talmudic שָׂדָה, "chest" or "chestlike seat for the women on the back of the camel." All these explanations are at variance with the principles of grammatical formation, common sense, and the plain fact that שָׂדָה means "the beloved," not "lady."[1]

A word common both to Hebrew and the Aramaic dialects is נַחַל, "valley" or "brook." This word is usually derived from a supposed verbal root נחל, which is said to be related to חלל, "to hollow out." This is, however, a mere conjecture. The Assyrian *naḫlu* or *naḫallu* means likewise "valley" or "ravine" or "brook." The verb *naḫâlu*, "to compress" or "to confine," is, however, preserved at

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[1] We may here be permitted to propose a new explanation of the well known divine attribute שַׁדַּי, which is usually combined with the Arabic شَدِيد, "strong," the form itself being defined as an abstract noun terminating in *ai* (see Stade, *Hebräische Grammatik*, §. 301a). In the Assyrian list of synonyms *W. A. I.* v. 28, 82h *šadû* is explained as a synonym of *šaḳû*, "to be high," and the succeeding line is devoted to the definition of *šâdû*, "mountain," syn. *gablum*. We doubt whether any linguistic grounds can be urged against the analysis of the word שַׁדַּי as the form فَعَّل from שדה, "to be high *or* to be elevated." Assyrian phrases like *Bêl šâdê rabû*, "Bel, the great rock *or* mountain" and proper names like *Ilu-šâdâ'a*, "God is my rock," are in favour of this etymology.

the same time. The Assyrian *naḫlu* and the Hebrew נַחַל, "valley," is, therefore, the space confined between two hills or mountains. The word was afterwards applied to the brook flowing in the valley.

Hebrew מְחִיר, "price," has an exact Assyrian equivalent in *maḫîru*. In Hebrew מחר as a verb is not in use; in an Assyrian dictionary at least ten pages could be filled with verbal forms of *maḫâru*, "to receive"—the price, the wages is simply that which is received.

In like manner נָבִיא, "prophet," נֶדֶר, "vow," and many other words, are for the first time supplied with a satisfactory etymology by the Assyrian dictionary. Reserving the explanation of these curious words for future discussion, we cannot forbear expressing our entire agreement with the interpretation of the important word בְּרִית, put forth in the two latest editions of Gesenius's dictionary. It is no small merit of the editors to have discovered that the primary meaning of בְּרִית is "decision *or* ordinance *or* decree," and that "covenant" is the secondary signification. There is, indeed, in Assyrian a verbal stem *barû*, "to decide," which occurs, for instance, in an invocation to Izdubar (Sm. 1371). The whole passage deserves to be transcribed: *dâna-ta-ma ki-ma ili ta-bar-[ri], ta-az-za-az ina irṣi-tim ta-gam-mar di-[na], di-in-ka ul in-nên-ni ul im-mêš a[-mat-ka], ta-šal ta-ḫa-ṭi ta-da-ni ta-bar-ri u tuš-tê-šir, Šamaš šib-ṭa u purûsâ ka-tuk-ka ip-ḳid, šarrâni šakkanâkê u rubûtē pânûka kam-su, ta-bar-ri tê-rê-ti-šu-nu purûsâ-šu-nu ta-par-ra-as*, *i. e.* "Thou art a judge and decidest like a god; thou standst upon the earth, holding judgment; thy judgment is not reversed nor [thy sentence] ignored; thou rulest, thou examinest, thou judgest, thou decidest and governest, Samas has put the scepter and decision into thy hand.

Kings, potentates and magnates bow before thee; thou fixest their laws, thou directest their decrees."[1]

Assyrian is of equal value in those instances, where a Hebrew verb is only preserved in derived conjugations, while the meaning of the Qal is obscure. One instance may suffice. The well-known Hebrew verb הִכְלִים, "to treat any one ignominiously, to insult him," not occuring in the Qal, we cannot tell the original meaning of the Hifil. The ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary says, "The verb means 'to hit, *ferire*,'" and compares Arabic كَلَمَ, "to wound," in the second form "to speak, to address anybody" (originally to lash, see חטב in the eighth edition). Now the Assyrian has the two verbs *kalâmu* and *ḳalâmu*, "to

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[1] As we have had occasion to remark in chapter iv, the advantages to etymological research resulting from the study of Assyrian extend also to the Semitic sister tongues, more especially to the Aramaic dialects. Thus the well-known Syriac word ܬܪܓܡܢܐ, "interpreter," of which the Assyrian form *targumânu* has been recently discovered by Mr. Theo. G. Pinches (see Procedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology, Feb. 6, 1883, p. 73), receives for the first time a satisfactory etymology by the Assyrian verbal root *ragâmu*, "to speak," from which *rigmu*, "word," is derived. *Targumânu* is "the speaker," who speaks for others by interpreting their words. Even the ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary keeps to the traditional etymology, according to which *targumânu* is to be derived from רָגַם, "to throw with stones" or "to stone," the transition of meaning being explained by the comparison of the Latin *jacere*, "to throw," with its compound *trajicere*, "to translate." Again, the Qal of the Aramaic שְׁהֵל, "to persuade," is proved by the Assyrian *šadâlu* to be a synonym of *patû*, "to be open." *Irṣitu šâdiltu* is "the wide earth"; *bâbu šâdiltu* is a "wide door." שְׁהֵל thus answers exactly to the Hebrew פָּתַח.

be small"; *kalûmu* is a child (*W. A. I.* ii. 30, 43 c); *kalmatu* and *ḳalmatu* are, as in Aramaic, the names for the smallest beasts, like the worms; the vocabularies call expressly *ḳalmu (kalmu)* a synonym of *ḳallu*, Heb. קַל (*W. A. I.* ii. 36. 40. 41 a). Thus Assyrian *kullumu*, "to treat any one ignominiously," meant originally "to estimate lightly," *parvi aestimare, leve habere.* Hebrew הִכְלִים is therefore the exact synonym of קִלֵּל, חֵקֵל.

IX.

THE Assyrian verb is frequently used in a sense differing from that of its Hebrew equivalent, thus showing the original meaning of the latter. The Assyrian *nabâṭu* means "to be bright" or "to shine," and in the causative form, "to cause to shine" or "to make bright." The ideas of brightness and sight being so intimately related, we can see at once the true etymology of the Hebrew נבט, Hifil הִבִּיט, "to look." The ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary compares the Arabic نَبَطَ, "to spring forth," and the Talmudic נְבַט, "to sprout forth," thus, it appears, thinking it possible that הִבִּיט, "to look," is literally "to cause to spring forth," *sc.* "the looks from the eyes." But by such arbitrary additions many other actions could be called הִבִּיט. The same edition states that the original meaning of סָלַח, "to forgive" or "to remit sins," is "to loose." This explanation is given without a query, and the Arabic equivalent is not even referred to. Now the Assyrian *salâḫu* means "to sprinkle," and is used with reference to sacrificial purification. This etymology is at once simple and in full accordance with Hebrew modes of thought.

The etymology of נִיר, "to cultivate a field," and נִיר, "cultivated field," is still explained in the latest edition of Gesenius's dictionary by the curious assumption that נִיר is

much the same as הֵנִיר, the Hifil of נוּר, and that נִיר literally means *den Acker lichten*, or "to till the field." There is, however, no analogy for such a mutilation of a Hifil form. A single glance at the glossary of any Assyriological publication would have shown the editors of the dictionary whence a much more likely etymology of נִיר is to be obtained. In Assyrian ניר means "to subjugate," and is used of the cultivation of the ground. *Nîru* is "yoke." The expression has an exact equivalent in the Latin "domare" and "subigere."

The question as to the primary signification of the Heb. ארר, "to curse," has often been raised, but all attempts at a satisfactory explanation have proved unsuccessful. Now, the Assyrian verbal stem *arâru*, though commonly meaning "to curse, to lay under the ban" (compare *arratu*, "curse"), is frequently used in the sense of "to bind" or "to catch." Compare also *arru*, "fowler," *irritu*, "sling *or* fetter." We are inclined to believe that this is the original meaning of the Heb. ארר, an opinion which derives considerable support from the analogy of the Heb. חָבַר, "to bind" and "to bind by means of charms" or "to charm."

By an attentive study of the Assyrian dictionary doubts are often created as to the correctness of etymologies apparently genuine and long since accepted. Thus, the current etymology of Heb. קָצַר, "to reap" and "to be short," which is based on the comparison of the Arabic قصر, "to cut," is both simple and satisfactory. By means of the cutting scythe the harvest is accomplished. The instrumentality of cutting is required to shorten that which is long. Turning to Assyrian, however, we find a verbal stem *kaṣâru*, "to bind" or "to collect." קָצִיר, "harvest"

might, therefore, with equal right be defined as the time of gathering (compare אָסִיף), and קָצַר, "to be short" would literally be "to be *strictum*" or "*constrictum*." So far both etymologies are equally natural and convincing. In addition to "harvest," however, קָצִיר means also "bough," which is explained, in accordance with the former etymology, as the "cut off" object. But are we to imagine "cut off" boughs in passages like Isaiah xxvii. 11, Job xiv. 9 or Ps. lxxx. 12: "She (the vine) sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river"? Gesenius, perplexed by the difficulty of explaining קָצִיר, "bough," by קצר, "to cut," is inclined to separate קָצִיר entirely from קצר. By adopting the Assyrian etymology of קצר ("to bind") every difficulty is removed. Analogous with שׂוֹכָה, שׂוֹכָךְ and עֲבֹת the bough was called קָצִיר on account of its twisted condition.

Few etymologies have so much exercised and vexed the ingenuity of Semitic scholars as that of מָשַׁל, with its two discrepant meanings "to be similar" and "to govern." The ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary, adopting the conjecture of Fleischer, explains מָשַׁל by the Arabic مثل, "to stand" or "to stand erect" like the servant who stands erect (المَاثِل) before his master. The following development of meanings is proposed for مثل: "to place, to place oneself or a thing in a certain position, to represent, to place a thing by the side of another, to compare." מָשָׁל is, therefore, said to mean "representation" and מֹשֵׁל, "governor," is represented as "he who stands in the government" (במלכות is boldly supplied, with the comparison of the Arabic phrase قام بالمملكة). We think that many an objection could be brought forward against this etymology. The same verbal stem, *mašâlu*, exists in Assyrian. We frequently

read in the annals of the Assyrian kings: "I planted a park *tamšil šâdû Ḫamâni* "in the likeness of the mountain of Chaman" or "I built a palace *tamšil êkal Ḫattê* "in the likeness of a Hittite palace." *Mišlâni* are "two equal halves," and *šumšulu* means "to divide into two equal halves." *Mašâlu* means, however, also "to shine." *Mušâlu*, "splendour," is a general term for anything of a shining character. מֹשֵׁל is the governor as the person who is distinguished by the splendour of his appearance.

The Hebrew and Assyrian שַׂר, *šarru*, "prince, king," exhibits the same primary signification. The Hebrew word is usually derived from a supposed stem שׂרר, "to govern," this meaning being obtained by the assumption that "to govern" is literally "to divide" or rather "to dispose," the root being שׂר, "to cut." *Šarru* being the name of the king in Babylonia and Assyria, we naturally look for an Assyrian etymology of the word. Now in Assyrian *šarâru* is "to shine," *šarûru* is the magnificent splendour of the stars, of the rising sun *(šarûr Šamši)*. It is a synonym of the common Assyrian word *mêlammu* (see *W. A. I.* ii. 35, 7 e.f), especially applied to the splendour of royal majesty. Compare phrases like: *pulḫê mêlammê bêlûti'a išḫupûšu* "the fear of the splendour of my majesty threw him down." Tiglathpileser I styles himself "the bright day, whose splendour overthrows the four quarters of the Universe." Observe also the proud appellation *Šamaš mâti*, "the Sun of the country," often used by the Assyrian and Babylonian monarchs. It can, therefore, hardly be doubted, that our explanation both of מֹשֵׁל and שַׂר is in full accordance with Oriental modes of thought.[1]

[1] The objection raised by Paul Haupt (see *Nachrichten von der Göttinger Ges. d. W.*, 25. April 1883, p. 105 f.) that the meaning "to shine"

The Heb. שָׂרַר, "to govern," is evidently formed from שַׂר, just as מָלַךְ, "to be king," is derived from מֶלֶךְ, "king." The king is called מֶלֶךְ, *malik*, as he who decides. The Arabic meaning of مَلَكَ, "to take possession of a thing," seems to be the latest development of the meanings of the stem מלך.

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is assumed for too many Assyrian words, is not valid. All languages are rich in such terms. The only difficulty consists in discovering the shades of difference between the various synonyms. The verb *nasâku*, by which this objection was occasioned, cannot mean "to string together"; *aban nisiḳti* or simply *nisiḳtu* is not the pearl, but the precious stone. *Nasâḳu* is a synonym of *aḳâru* (יקר), "to be precious"; *aban nisiḳti* and *aban aḳartu* mean both "precious stone." What sense does that supposed meaning "to string together" yield in passages like *W. A. I.* i. 7 E. 44, 72. v. 33b, or on the newly discovered monument of Nebuchadnezzar I., where the king styles himself *rubû nâdu nasḳu*, "the great, the sublime, the magnificent"?

X.

In some instances even the rich stores of the Assyrian vocabulary fail to provide us with the verbal roots of certain derived nouns common to Assyrian and Hebrew. The Assyrian language, however, amply compensates for this defect by a number of derivative forms, from which valuable suggestions as to the original meaning of the root in question may be gathered. Thus the word for "stone" is formed from the root אבן in all the Semitic languages, except in Arabic, where a special word, حَجَر, is in use. Nevertheless the Arabic verbal root *'abana*, "to clot" (of the blood), is stated to represent the original meaning of the root אבן, the stone being called אֶבֶן as the hardened object. I doubt the correctness of this etymology. In addition to *abnu*, "stone," Assyrian possesses other derivatives of the same root, *e. g.*, *ubânu*, "point of a rock" or "tip of the finger." It is, therefore, very probable that the original meaning of the root אבן is "to be pointed," and that אֶבֶן is the stone as the pointed object.[1]

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[1] The etymology of אֲגַם, "bog," proposed in the latest editions of Gesenius's dictionary is another instructive instance of the danger attending the injudicious comparison of Arabic verbs, with obviously late meanings. Hebrew phrases like אֲגַמֵּר נַפְשׁ, "troubled in spirit",

The question concerning the original meaning of דְּבֵלָה, "cake made of pressed figs," is likewise satisfactorily answered by the Assyr. *dublu*, which is given *W. A. I.* ii. 35, 43e as a synonym of *išdu* and *nirmû*, the synonyms of *ušše*, "foundation." דְּבֵלָה is, thus, an expression analogous with אֲשִׁישָׁה, "cake made of pressed raisins."

The etymology of few words has been the subject of so much discussion as that of אָדָם, "man." It has been supposed that אָדָם is connected with אֲדָמָה, "ground," which is *primâ facie* not improbable. The translation "earth-born," however, is not admissible, as Ewald has conclusively shown on grammatical grounds. It is impossible to mention here the numerous explanations of the word which have been put forward. An account of them will be found in any linguistic commentary on Genesis. Dillmann rightly remarks: "A certain etymology for אָדָם has just as little been found as for *homo*." אָדָם is in Hebrew and Phœnician the generic name of man. It is also preserved in Himyaritic, but lost in Arabic. In Assyrian a verbal root אדם is preserved in a number of derived nouns, which show that the original meaning of the root is synonymous with that of בנה, "to build" or "to beget." Thus we have *admânu*,

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and the analogy of the Aramaic and Assyrian dialects (compare the Assyrian *agâmu*, "to be sad") plainly indicate that the original meaning of the root אגם is "to be troubled." The "bog" is, therefore, called אֲגַם, Assyr. *agammu*, from the "troubled" or "turbid" state of its water. It is surprising that so simple an etymology should have failed to recommend itself to the attention of the editors of the dictionary, who assert that the Arabic أَجِمَ, "to stink," which is undoubtedly a denominative verb derived from أَجَم, "bog," represents the original meaning of the root אגם.

"building" or "dwelling-place," and *admu*, "child," which is expressly stated to be a synonym of *lidânu* (ילד), and is especially used of the young of a bird.[1] Compare also the analogous expression *abal iṣṣûri*, "young bird," with Hebrew בֶּן־יוֹנָה, "young pigeon." אָדָם is therefore synonymous with בֵּן, meaning "the begotten one" or "the created one." The verbal root אדם was then used of the cultivation of the ground[2]; אֲדָמָה is therefore "the cultivated ground," as in Gen. iv. 2, and אֹהֵב אֲדָמָה (2 Chron. xxvi. 10) is "the lover of agriculture" or "the agriculturist." The Assyrian reduplicated root *dadam* (comp. *babâlu*, "to bring," aside of *abâlu*, רבל) means likewise "to cultivate," and *dadmu* is "dwelling-place" or "cultivated land," or "country" in general.

Another word whose true etymology has hitherto been vainly sought for is אָח, "brother." Now the Assyrian equivalent, *âḫû*, has the additional sense of "side." *Aḫû*, "brother," may therefore be defined as the person who stands by the side of the firstborn or as the next kinsman, or, again, both words may be derived from the same verbal stem אחה, "to surround" or "to protect." The Hebrew name of the brother would thus be analogous with the Sanskrit *bhrâtar*.

The etymology of אֵם, "mother," set forth in the latest edition of Gesenius's dictionary is a characteristic specimen of modern Hebrew lexicography. אֵם is there mysteriously explained as the person who precedes the child, the

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[1] See *W. A. I.* ii. 37, 21 e. f.

[2] It may be interesting to note that in the Talmud the participle of the Pual of בנה is used in the same sense, see Sota 34b: מְבֻנָּה, "cultivated" (Rashi: מְיֻשֶּׁבֶת פֵּרוֹת, "covered with fruits").

Arabic verbal root أَمَّ meaning "to precede" or "to go before." The mother certainly precedes the child in point of time, but the same may be said of the father. Another derivative of the root אמם, namely אַמָּה, "cubit," is explained as meaning originally "forearm," the forearm being the *mother* of the arm. If the forearm be the mother of the arm, the upper arm is probably the father. Where is, then, the child? Finally, אֻמָּה, "nation," is defined, in strict accordance with the explanation given by the native lexicologists of the Arabic equivalent أُمَّة, as the collective body of men following a common leader, or إِمَام. It must be owned that these explanations possess a certain degree of ingenuity, but they are hardly satisfactory. The Assyrian verbal root אמם means "to be wide" or "spacious." *Ummu* is therefore "the womb" (in which sense it often occurs in Assyrian), as the roomy receptacle of the child, then "the mother." Compare the analogous use of Hebrew רַחַם, "womb," in the sense of "woman," in Judges v. 30 (רַחֲמָתַיִם). *Ammatu*, "cubit," signified originally "width" or "length," like the Hebrew כְּבֵרָה and similar terms, and was afterwards applied to a definite measure. אַמָּה, in Assyrian *ummu*, is "the nation," as a vast or numerous body of men. *Nišê rapšâtē*, "the vast nations," is one of the commonest expressions occuring in the annals of the Assyrian kings.

XI.

HAVING thus shown that the Assyrian language reveals for the first time for a large class of isolated Hebrew nouns the signification of the stems from which these nouns are derived, we now proceed to prove that the very rich cuneiform literature unlocks for us not only the meaning of many word-stems, but also in a large number of cases reveals the stems themselves. It is impossible here systematically to present all the various classes of words whose true etymology is for the first time obtained, and to illustrate them by examples. We must confine ourselves to a few cases, but these will suffice not only to show how necessary is a revision of the Hebrew lexicon by the aid of the lexicon of the nearest related Semitic language, the Assyrian, but also to show how revolutionary such a revision must prove.

It is well known that the Hebrew, like the South Semitic languages, had two ח's, which were, indeed, represented by the same character in writing, but which in pronunciation differed considerably from each other, and were certainly kept distinctly apart. Wherever the Arabic lacks an equivalent (I omit the Ethiopic intentionally), it has been until now simply impossible to pronounce the Hebrew stem correctly. The Assyrian, which has reduced its weak ח to a *spiritus lenis,* but has firmly preserved its strong ח,

puts an end to all doubt. It proves the incorrectness of a whole list of assumptions which were only too hastily based on Arabic stems with similar, or even in part with quite different meanings. All Arabic comparisons which the ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary makes for such words as חדה, חָרִיץ, חיש, חֹרֶשׁ, חשל, זרח, מָחוֹז, מחץ, סחק, and שׂיח are unquestionably proved to be wrong by the Assyrian equivalents *ḫadû*, "to rejoice"; *ḫarîṣu*, „moat"; *ḫâšu*, „to hasten"; *ḫuršu*, "forest"; *ḫašâlu*, "to crush"; *zarâḫu*, "to rise" (of the sun, for instance); *maḫâzu*, "town"; *maḫâṣu*, "to strike" (used as in Hebrew of smiting the thighs as a gesture of grief); *saḫâpu*, "to overthrow"; *šâḫu*, „to sprout" (*šiḫtu*, "a sprout"). In most cases no blame is to be laid on Hebrew lexicography; still, the mistake might easily have been avoided of giving a *ḥ* to the Hebrew word for "to rejoice" (חדה) on account of the Arabic حَدَا, "to urge camels by singing to them," or to the word for "to rise" (זרח) on account of a rare Arabic equivalent meaning "to strew" (ذرح). Further, the Assyrian elucidates with surprising clearness stems whose numerous meanings have often been brought into connexion in the strangest manner, by showing that the supposed single stem represents really two, one with *ḥ*, the other with *ḫ*. Thus the Assyrian shows that Heb. חֵץ, "arrow" (Assyr. *uṣṣu*), and חצץ, "to cut off, to pierce" (Assyr. *ḫaṣâṣu*), go back to quite different stems; that פתח, "to open" (Assyr. *pitû*), and פתח, "to carve, to engrave," for instance on wood or stone (Assyr. *patâḫu*), have nothing at all to do with each other. Assyrian is helpful in still other ways. The Hebrew verb משח has the two meanings "to anoint" and "to measure." It has been supposed that we have here a single verb, because in Arabic

the surveyor is called مَسَّاح, with ح, and the two meanings have been united in a characteristic manner by saying that משח means properly to stroke, to spread, either with dye or oil = to anoint, or by passing the hand over anything = to measure. But in Assyrian "to measure" is *mašâḫu*, the „measure" is *mêšiḫtu*, the "surveyor" is *mâšiḫu*. It appears at once that the Arabic ح proves nothing at all; that, on the contrary, مَسَّاح, precisely like مَلَّاح (Assyr. *malâḫu*), "boatman," is simply borrowed in Arabic.[1]

[1] We must persist in the non-Semitic origin of the Semitic word *malâḫu (mallâḫu)*, which is expressly attested by the Assyrians themselves, see *W. A. I.* v. 21, 5 c. d. Assyr. *malâḫu* cannot be connected with the Semitic word for "salt," מֶלַח, with *ḥ*. The fact that Hebrew מִלָּח occurs only in passages of the books of Ezekiel and Jonah is in favour of the late indroduction of the word into Hebrew.

XII.

PASSING on to other illustrations of the same fact, we find that the Assyrian often leads to an entirely different stem from that which has been until now accepted.

The well-known measure כּוֹר, כֹּר, κόρος, having the same meaning as חֹמֶר, can *per se* be derived from כרר or from כור; the Assyrian *kâru*, from which the name of the inspector of measures and weights, *rab kârê*[1], comes, decides for כור, not כרר, which the ninth edition of Gesenius's dictionary prefers. Be it incidentally remarked that כֵּרָה, "feast," is not to be derived, with the ninth edition, from כרר, but from כרה, as the Assyrian *kirêtu*, having the same meaning, teaches. On the other side, the ninth edition derives the word for hole, cave, חוֹר, חֻר, whose stem might be either חור or חרר, from חור, although already the Arabic خُرّ might have led to the correct etymology. The Assyrian *ḫurru*, with the same meaning, settles the question, and it is but fair to say that Levy has already recognized the correct stem both for כּוֹר and for חוֹר.

For the derivation of קֻבָּה, "stomach of the ruminating animals" (Deut. xviii. 3), where Gesenius's dictionary is

[1] See *W. A. I.* ii. 31, 48c and compare the Talm. ריש כורי, *Kiddushin*, 76 b.

uncertain whether to adopt the stem יקב or קבה, and of קֵבָה, "belly" (Num. xxv. 8), for which קוב is proposed as the stem, we need not refer to Assyrian, the Aramaic مصْ with its derivatives showing clearly that the stem of both words is קבה.

The Hebrew name of the bullock, שׁוֹר, פָּר, fem. פָּרָה, may come from פרר or פרה. The Assyrian *parû (pârû)* teaches that the stem is פרה, the same stem as that from which פְּרִי, "fruit," is derived. The original meaning of the stem in question is "to spring, to spring up," as the ninth edition rightly supposes, although it takes פרר for this stem. It may be interesting to note here another stem, namely אנב, "to spring," from which both the names for "fruit" and for "hare" are derived; אֶבְיָא, אֶבָא denoting the fruit, as that which springs forth or bursts out, while אַרְנֶבֶת signifies the hare as *Springinsfeld*.

The Hebrew אָב, which is used in Job viii. 12 and Solomon's Song vi. 11 of the germinating or shooting of plants, may, as is accepted by every one, come from the same root as the Aramaic אִנְבָּא, "fruit," found in the book of Daniel. But if this be so, it is impossible any longer to consider אבב as the stem; for Assyrian *inbu*, "fruit," st. constr. *inib*, as well as the verb in Piel, *unnubu*, "to bear fruit," and other derivatives like *nannabu=pirḫu*, "a sprout," lead undoubtedly to a stem אנב, from which, as our original dictionaries expressly inform us, the hare *annabu* (Arab. أَرْنَب), as the springer, received its name.

The etymology even of the most common Hebrew words is changed by the Assyrian. It is still to-day usual to say that the Hebrew preposition אֵת, "with" (אִתִּי, "with me"),

corresponds to an original אִתְּ, so that אִתִּי, "with me," meant originally "a meeting with me." The Assyrian *itti*, "with," destroys this hypothesis, for the Assyrian *itti*, *ittu* is clearly the feminine form of *itû*, "side," pl. *itâti*. *Ittî*, „with me," means simply "at my side." *Itû* and *ittu*, "side," are among the commonest Assyrian words. Certainly no one would dare to adduce the Ethiopic *enta* against this explanation. On the other hand, the Assyrian confirms the derivation of עֵת, "time," as equivalent to עֶנֶת (a derivation first correctly recognized by Fleischer); for in Assyrian by the side of *ittu*, *êttu*, „time," we meet the still commoner masculine form *ênu*, *înu*, which corresponds to the Aramaic עֵן (בְּעֵן), but has nothing at all to do with the Arabic حِين.

In cases like תְּהוֹם or מְאֹד we admit that without the aid of Assyrian it was difficult to say whether the ת and מ were radical or merely prefixes. In the face of Assyr. *tâmtu*, *ti'âmtu*, "sea," and *ma'âdu*, "to be much (*mu'du*, "multitude"), the radical nature of ת and מ can no longer be denied.[1]

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[1] With respect to the solution of such difficult questions, the constant effort to compare Hebrew with Arabic has again been a barrier to the recognition of the truth even in easy cases like the stem תלע, with its derivative תּוֹלָע, "worm." The ninth edition combines this word with ילע (Arabic ولغ), "to lick," a stem having no existence in Hebrew. Besides, who ever saw a worm that licks? A dog licks, not a worm. In three passages of the Old Testament (Job xxix. 17, Joel i. 6, Ps. xxx. 14) the teeth are called מַתְלְעוֹת; but in spite of this the form מַלְתָּעוֹת, which occurs only once (Ps. lviii. 7) and arises from the evident transposition of *t* and *l*, is declared to be the original form, and is explained from the Arabic لتغ, "to prick." But a tooth does not prick anything. Could not the Hebrew of itself teach that

The Hebrew word for "deluge," מַבּוּל, is universaly derived from יבל. But apart from the fact, that the form would be without analogy, we deny that Heb. יבל ever means "to flow" like the Arabic وبل. Heb. יבל has, like the Assyr. *abâlu* (*wabâlu*), invariably the meaning "to lead *or* to bring." יְבַלֵּי־מַיִם (Is. xxx. 25. xliv. 4) are aqueducts *leading* the waters to the fields.[1] The obscure word אִיבֵל in Dan. viii. 2. 3. 6 does not disprove this statement. Just as מַבּוּעַ, "spring" comes from נבע, מַבּוּל may be derived from נבל. The stem נבל has in Assyrian as well as in Hebrew the meaning "to spoil" or "to destroy"; compare Heb. נְבֵלָה, Assyr. *nabultu* (syn. *mîtu*, *W. A. I.* v. 31, 38 d), "corpse." The intransitive Hebrew verb נָבַל is used of the withering and destruction of the leaves; Assyr. *nabâlu*, the usual verb for "to destroy," is especially applied to the destruction of nature occasioned by the ravages of storms and incessant rains. Compare *nabbaltu*, "huricane" and phrases like *nablu ušaznin êli nakirê'a*, "I caused destruction to rain on my enemies."

The well-known word אָרוֹן, "box, ark," is by Muehlau and Volck rightly pronounced to be of doubtful origin. The Assyrian dictionary again settles the question by the simple fact that *êrênu*, the full equivalent of the Hebrew אָרוֹן, has as synonym *êrû*. The stem is therefore ארה, and not ארן.

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the stem תלע means "to gnaw," so that the worm would be the gnawer, and the teeth the gnawers? The Assyrian confirms this fully, just as in general sound Assyrian etymology is in complete harmony with sound Hebrew etymology.

[1] Compare the analogous names of Assyrian channels like *Bâbêlat-ḫêgalli*, "bringer of abundant water" (*W. A. I.* i. 27 No. 2, 6).

If we bear in mind the fact that the Assyrian language was fixed in literature many centuries before the oldest known Hebrew texts and thousands of years before Arabic, we cannot be surprised that Assyrian has preserved in not a few cases the oldest forms of stems lost or disguised by the process of decay in the kindred tongues. Thus the true meaning of the Semitic word for "bride," Heb. כַּלָּה, is obscured in the cognate dialects. According to Hebrew as well as Aramaic the name can only be derived from כלל, "to encircle;" but none of the different explanations which have been put forward, as "the girl provided with a wreath" or "the veiled," has yet met with general approval. The Assyrian puts an end to all doubt. In Assyrian the bride is called *kallâtu,* with a long *a* in the second syllable. That shows at once that the stem cannot be כלל. We are further taught that the original meaning of the word is not "bride," but "the bride's chamber," its ideogram denoting "the shut-up room." The stem is clearly the same stem כלא, "to shut up," from which in Hebrew as well as in Assyrian the prison is called בֵּית כֶּלֶא, *bît kilê. Kallâtu,* "bride chamber," was afterwards applied to the bride. Compare the analogous use of the Arabic حَرَم, "harem," and the German *Frauenzimmer.*

As we have had occasion to remark p. 24, footnote, a number of Targumic and Talmudic words, formerly regarded as being of Aryan origin, are now proved by the cuneiform literature to be good Semitic, namely Babylonian, borrowed chiefly in or since the time of the exile. We stated at the same time that these words cannot be derived according to Hebrew laws of formation, but must be understood as Babylonian words. Now, we are of opinion that the Old Testa-

ment contains likewise a number of words which are of Babylonian origin, because they have a satisfactory explanation only if they are understood as Babylonian words.[1] One instance may suffice. The Hebrew and Aramaic name of the Pleiads is כִּימָה (Amos v. 8; Job. IX. 9, XXXVIII. 31). The word is generally combined with the Arabic كَوَمَ, "to have a large hump" (said of the camel), and explained by the Arabic كُومَة, "heap," so that the Pleiads would be called כִּימָה as an accumulation of stars. I do not think that any of my readers will find this interpretation of that wonderful group of stars poetical or even true; those seven stars, which are compared by Persian poets with a necklace or a bouquet of jewels, could hardly be compared with a heap of earth. Babylonia is the home of astronomy, and most of those names of stars, that occur in the Old Testament, as of Saturn, כִּיוָן, *Kaiwánu*, are of Babylonian origin.[2]

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[1] The Aramaic dialects exhibit a considerable number of such Babylonisms. The two verbs שֵׁיזֵב (the Babylonian Shafel from *ézébu*, זזב) and שֵׁיצֵא (the Babylonian Shafel from *aṣú*, יצא) rank among the most curious and instructive examples. Observe the צ of the last-named form, which alone disproves Aramaic origin. As Paul Haupt has first shown, the words for "tribute" or "tax" that occur in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel—בְּלוֹ and מִדָּה (מִנְדָּה)—are simply the Babylonian words *biltu*, "tax" (literally, "what is brought," from ובל) and *mandattu*, *mandantu*, "tribute" (lit. "what is given," from נתן = נרן); comp. Aram. שַׁבְּא, "sabbath." These Babylonian or Assyrian words had been adopted by the nations on whom the tribute was imposed by the monarchs of the Babylonian and Assyrian empire.

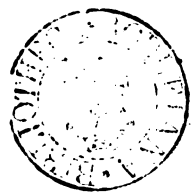
[2] The same is the case with most of the names used up to the present day for the various constellations, as "the Waggon," "the Lion," "the Twins," which are to be found in the long lists of stars handed down to us through Asurbanipal's library.

So the word כִּימָה is evidently nothing but the Assyrian *kimtu*, "family," borrowed by the Hebrews as כִּימָה, just as *birtu* was changed into בִּירָה. The stem is *kamû*, "to tie," the family being called *kimtu* because its members are connected by one common tie. It would even seem that the Hebrew poet himself was still conscious of that original meaning; this is at least suggested by the words of the author of the book of Job (xxxviii. 31): "Dost thou *bind* the *bands* of the Pleiads?"

In concluding this treatise we venture to offer with due reserve a few suggestions as to the etymology of the Hebrew word מִין, usually translated by "species" or "kind," the etymology of which Wellhausen rightly pronounces a riddle. We formulate our objections to the translation "species" in the following propositions: 1) In phrases like Gen. vi. 20: "of fowls after their *kind*, and of cattle after their *kind*, of every kreeping thing of the earth after his *kind*" or Deut. xiv. 13. 14: "the vulture after his *kind* and every raven after his *kind*," we feel the want of the plural form.[1] 2) The explanation of the word מִין by the Arabic مَانَ ٱلْأَرْضَ, "he has divided *or* opened up the earth by the plough for the purpose of sowing," is far-fetched.—Guided by Assyrian phrases like "The gods created the living creatures *mâla bašâ* "as many as there are" or *mâla šuma nabâ* "as many as have a name," we have long thought that מִין simply means "number," a meaning which fits admirably whereever the word occurs. If we consider that the use of the word is confined to the so-called Code of the priests,

[1] The *ē* in מִינֵהֶם Gen. i. 21, which is not the Plural-*ê*, is explained by Ewald in his Grammar, §. 247 d.

to Ezek. XLvii. 10 and to four passages in Deut. xiv, which modern criticism places in the time of the exile, we may venture to identify the Hebrew מִין with the Babylonian *mînu*, "number," which is a pure Babylonian form contracted from *minyu*, as *bûnu*, "child," *bîru*, "midst" and many others are contracted from *bunyu* and *biryu*.



Index

of the Hebrew words explained.

Index

of the Aramaic words explained.